Minor Myers.

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A passion for books

Reflections on the Presidency of
Minor Myers jr.
at Illinois Wesleyan University
1989-2003

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Professor and Associate Provost Emeritus

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Books are primarily for reading but also for looking through. Art books, thousands of them, and myriad other sorts of picture books, source books, junk books, magazines, pamphlets are my archipelago. Books are searched for, stumbled upon, bought, sold, cut up, thrown away, treasured a lifetime, forgotten, ignored, new, used, antiquarian, obscure, very clear, irritating, lost, and a thousand other things . . . books are for me what trees are for landscape painters.

R B. Kitaj, from *Confessions of an Old Jewish Painter,*
written in 2001-2 and published posthumously in 2017

Prologue

Minor Myers jr was midway through his fourteenth year as President of Illinois Wesleyan University when, in February 2003, it became known that he was suffering from terminal lung cancer. In a matter of months, he had passed away. He was sixty years old and appeared to be fit and likely to live for decades more. Thus, his illness and sudden demise caught the faculty and staff, the students, and the many friends of the University by surprise. Following his death, the conversations began on how to provide a fitting memorial to his years of service to the University.

More than anything, Minor had concentrated his efforts on providing a new library for the University. The Ames Library was the result of his commitment and efforts; it was in fact the memorial to his presidency that would endure, whether his name would ever appear associated with it or not. Under Minor's direction, a local sculptor had made a life-size statue of John Wesley Powell, who Minor revered as one of the true progenitors of the University. Powell's likeness was seated in a chair, as if he were leading a discussion with students, in the center of the library's first floor rotunda. Influenced by that earlier work, an early proposal was to commission Rick Harney, the sculptor, to make a full size likeness of Minor, to be placed on the entry plaza to The Ames Library. This project was quickly approved and the resulting bronze figure

of Minor is now for all who enter the library a permanent reminder of Minor's love of books.

That alone did not satisfy the need many felt to memorialize our departed president. The University had recently reached an agreement with the area conference of the Methodist Church to acquire their office building that had stood on Park Street since the 1950s. The Church was closing the office and moving its operations to a new building in Springfield, and they hoped that the University would assume responsibilities for the building and find a new purpose for it. Indeed we did have a use, as we were already considering a new facility for the Career Center, as well as moving the Admissions Office from Holmes Hall to a larger facility. Although the site was well positioned for relocating these programs, an architectural assessment of the existing building was not encouraging regarding reuse of the Methodist building.

Provost McNew (acting President for the year following Minor's death) took the bold step of proposing that we build an entirely new facility on the site and name it after Minor. The idea quickly gained University support, and fund raising began for the Minor Myers Welcome Center. The University's next President, Richard Wilson, took over management of this project, which was opened and dedicated in 2008.

These two memorials in Minor's memory—the Harney sculpture and the Welcome Center—provided physical memorials to Minor's service as University President. His name would forever be associated with a major University

building, as various other campus buildings had already been so named. Although recognizing the significance of these physical memorials to our late president, I came to feel that something important was being overlooked.

The University is fortunate to once have had a faculty member who took an interest in our history. Elmo Watson joined the University for only three years (1947-1950), but during that time he wrote a history of the University's first 100 years *(The Illinois Wesleyan Story 1850-1950)*, a volume replete with fact and detail that serves as the main archival compilation addressing the first century of Illinois Wesleyan's history. Following Watson's volume, Lloyd Berthoff (fourteenth president) wrote what could be considered a continuation of Watson's history *(A Personal Memoir of the Berthoff Years at Illinois Wesleyan University)*. Robert Eckley (fifteenth president) also wrote a memoir *(Pictures at an Exhibition)*, and the current President of the Board of Trustees George Vinyard, but then newly graduated from Illinois Wesleyan and working as assistant to the President for a few years before moving on to law school, wrote another volume that filled the gap between Watson and Berthoff (*Illlinois Wesleyan University: Growth, Turning Points and New Directions Since the Second World War)*. Thus, we had a more-or-less continuous history of the University from 1850 to 1986. I began to worry that the chain might permanently be broken due to Minor's untimely demise.

I'm sure that Minor would have written his presidential memoir had he survived into retirement. Someone needed to

step forward to answer the call he himself could not answer. Thus, I first began to wonder who might rise to the challenge. A variety of possibilities occurred to me: Carl Teichman who coauthored with Minor the 150 year history of Illinois Wesleyan prepared for the year 2000; Janet McNew who served as Provost through the majority of his presidency and served as acting president in the year following his death; the indispensable Mona Gardner who had become his right hand in keeping track of the University's numbers as institutional research officer in his last years; Sue Stroyan (Anderson) the University Librarian Minor had hired; and notable members of the faculty such as Professor Robert Bray of the English department who has written several poems reflective of his feelings concerning Minor.

As the years passed and no one seemed to be stepping forward, I began to consider the possibility that perhaps I had enough to say to take on such a project myself. Thus began my own work that led to this volume. In what follows here, however, we have a personal view rather than a comprehensive chapter in the history of the University. Although a history seemed beyond either my talents or ambitions, a more personal set of reflections on my acquaintance with and impressions of Minor appeared to be a manageable goal.

I have called this writing "reflections." I might have used the term "memoir," but wanted to avoid the implication that I am claiming to have written Minor's own memoir, which would be impossible. People write their own memoirs, sometimes even several volumes worth; a memoir about

another person seems awkward at best, if not something of a self-contradiction. And although I reviewed the Myers material in the Ames Library archives and read through boxes of documents I had saved and brought home when leaving my campus office for retirement, I don't pretend to be a historian either—I have left too many loose ends that a good historian would have pursued and tied down.

Thus I continue to think of this text as what it claims to be: reflections, sometimes fragmentary and incomplete, rather than a comprehensive history. But "reflections" is not conventionally identified as a non-fiction genre, as "memoir" is. Though at times it possesses some of the mundane qualities of Lloyd Berthoff's and Bob Eckley's memoirs of their administrations, I hope this document I have written possesses a smidgen of the more writerly voice advocated, for example, in Mary Karr's guide to the art of memoir. I wanted to acknowledge the great things Minor accomplished as President, but as well I wanted to share stories that captured his altogether human side. In addition to his idealistic goals for the University, he could be obstinate and occasionally impetuous, to a degree even childlike[1]. Out of this amalgam of Minor's grand vision for the University's future seasoned by some personal foibles emerged what I believe was the golden age of Illinois Wesleyan University's first 150 years. Above all else, that is why this story needs to be told.

At the heart of this personal exploration of the presidency of Minor Myers jr lie not one but *two* libraries: to be sure the new library he built for the campus of Illinois Wesleyan

University, but as well the personal collection he acquired and kept in his home and what became of it. One might consider this pair of accomplishments to be the great achievements of his life, one public and the other personal. It is a tragic irony that on completing the public expression of his love of the book, he lived less than two more years. Though his personal library may have given him a measure of comfort in his last days, it was fated not to endure much beyond him. Surely there are lessons, if not morals, in the story I am about to tell. The learnings from libraries are not all to be found within the pages of the books they contain.

Chapter 1

Finding a Perfect Harmony

Minor Myers jr. was obsessed with books. One might be tempted to say that he was obsessed with libraries, but a library without books—say, an *electronic* library—would in his mind be a special kind of hell. Libraries are *book* repositories, for the purpose of containing as many books as they can hold, and nothing more. When he was hired as Illinois Wesleyan University President, he identified the need for a new and larger library as chief among its deficiencies, which he aimed to remedy. He knew he was the man for the job. Indeed, many among the faculty and trustees felt the same.

The name "University" offended Minor's sensibilities. He strongly preferred calling us a "College," not a university—he was a graduate of Carleton College, had followed his Princeton Ph.D. with an appointment to the faculty at Connecticut College where he rose to the level of Associate Dean, and then on to Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, New York where he held the post of Provost and Dean of Faculty. At Illinois Wesleyan, he avoided the pitfall of too frequent references to "At Hobart we used to . . ." that are sure killers of the admiration and loyalty of the new institution's faculty.

Instead, his constant quality reference point was Williams College. Making light of another of his obsessions, that of changing the name of "Illinois Wesleyan University" to "Powell College" or whatever, one wit sitting on the President's Cabinet privately suggested that we should consider "Illinois Williams College" as the new name

instead. Eventually the joke got back to him, and he took it in good humor.

Nonetheless, it was clear to us all that our "good old IWU, to its colors shall we always be true" failed to meet Minor's standards of what a reputable institution of collegiate grade should provide. Clearly, the major failing was to be seen in the library's lack of stature. The library we had was opened in 1968, a mere twenty years prior to Minor's assumption of the presidency. But it had failed already. One could foresee it in the report of a library review committee in the mid-sixties prior to the construction of the existing library. The committee suggested that space needs would be greatly reduced in the future, anticipating that over the next twenty years micro-fiche would replace paper records and books in most respects; storage needs for new media would be significantly reduced.

Amen. In twenty years, the library had accumulated a few microform storage cabinets and one or two microfiche readers that took up a corner of the circulation desk area. But really, nothing of any significance had changed in the twenty years since the "new" library had opened. And, to make matters even worse, an application for membership in Phi Beta Kappa a few years earlier had gone nowhere, with strong reservations expressed on limitations in the library.

Minor thus had his work cut out for him, but it was a job he took on with relish, commitment, and undying enthusiasm. But just a minute. As would be the case for most new presidents, he had walked into a set of pre-existing commitments and priorities.

First and foremost was a new athletic and recreation center. We were living with a glorified Quonset hut for a basketball gym. The locker rooms were grossly insufficient for both the home team and visitors to dress for a football game. The

outdoor track was shaped like a malformed egg as it made its way between the football field and the angle of Sugar Creek. Baseball was played on the football field. There was no softball field at all, with consequent gender equity issues. Soccer was played on the football practice field. Volleyball was played in a 1920 gym that also doubled as storage for School of Theatre Arts props and costumes.

Then there were the science programs. Despite the excellent reputation of IWU's biology and chemistry departments in particular, the biology department chair complained bitterly about the students who, coming from Chicago's northern and western suburbs, condescendingly observed that our lab facilities did not match those of their high schools. Microscopes were aging and obsolete in design. The chemistry department was almost totally devoid of electronic instrumentation. An administrative officer proposed that with its limited lab equipment, the department should deemphasize instrumental analysis in favor of "wet" chemistry—as if the graduate schools and industrial employers would be content with students whose lab training was not far advanced from what it had been in the 1920s.

Meanwhile, an informal group of fifty leading liberal arts colleges who had begun meeting together to explore the future of science at the liberal arts colleges were developing the idea of "the research colleges." They performed quantitative analyses showing that at a number of liberal arts colleges a higher percentage of B.A. and B.S. graduates went on to the Ph.D. than was occurring at the Ivy League and other top-grade research universities. Their second report, titled "Maintaining America's Scientific Productivity" (1987), gave us all a wake-up call. It was time for liberal arts colleges to stop assuming that we were overshadowed at

undergraduate science education by the major universities, and to proclaim our excellence.

On top of all that, in the year prior to Minor's assuming the presidency, a small committee had been established by Acting President Wendell Hess, to pursue an initiative with none other than Arnold Beckman, noted chemist, inventor and philanthropist and founder of Beckman Instruments. He had recently sold Beckman Instruments to SmithKline for something over $800 million (in the mid-1980s this was still a lot of money). Beckman was busy giving away his fortune for the advancement of science education, and it was his avowed intent, so he said, to give away his last dollar as he lay upon his deathbed. Although it may sound like wishful thinking to believe that an undergraduate college like Illinois Wesleyan University could attract the attention of so significant a scientist as Beckman, we believed we had an angle from which to approach him with a proposal.

Beckman was born and raised in the rural central Illinois community of Cullom, whose current population of 600 is probably about what it was at the turn of the last century when Beckman was a boy. In order to get a decent high school education, Beckman and family moved to Normal, Illinois so that Beckman could attend University High School. He earned his pocket change by playing the piano for silent movies at the Irvin Theatre in downtown Bloomington. He went to the University of Illinois for his bachelor's degree in chemistry where he studied under Professor Carl Marvel, who had come to the U of I campus after graduating from Illinois Wesleyan University just up the road.

From there, Beckman moved to the west coast for his doctorate at California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, where he joined the faculty in 1928. In 1934, having invented the pH meter, he left Caltech to found Beckman

Instruments, which quickly became a leader in the invention and manufacture of a variety of electronic scientific instruments. The business started in a Pasadena garage: forty years later, another young inventor started a business in a Los Altos garage. There's something about those Southern California garages, I suppose.

With an emerging fortune in hand, Beckman and his wife Mabel launched into a concerted philanthropic agenda. The Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation received a major infusion of funds with the sale of Beckman Instruments. The foundation was closely managed, with a small board consisting of Arnold and Mabel Beckman and three others, one of whom was Maurice Stans, Richard Nixon's secretary of commerce who left the cabinet to chair the finance committee of the Committee to Re-elect the President (popularly known by the acronym CREEP). Although this position somewhat blemished an otherwise exemplary record, Stans was a close personal friend of the Beckmans.

The importance of Stans to Illinois Wesleyan's plan to approach the Beckman Foundation arose from the fact that, a few decades earlier, Illinois Wesleyan had pursued a financial venture that paid off well for the University. For a period of time, the tax laws were such that privately held businesses were subject to a high capital gains tax at the time that an owner might pass away. It turned out that a kind of loophole existed. If ownership of the asset was transferred to a nonprofit institution and held for three years, it could be transferred back to the original heirs with a large reduction in the tax liability. Stans was the University's investment advisor through a number of these transactions.

Through this investment scheme, IWU for a period of time owned Playskool Manufacturing Co., the Hollywood Drake Hotel, Atlas Spring & Manufacturing Co., and several

other businesses.[2] According to Lloyd Berthoff's presidential memoir, the University accrued about $5 million in profits during the time when this tax advantage was open. Regarding the Beckman Foundation prospect, then, Stans was our inside man.

With funds not too short of a billion dollars in the foundation's kitty, Beckman at least entertained the possibility of giving away the entire corpus (he failed to meet his alleged intention, as the Beckman Foundation continues to operate and in its 2013 year-end report gave an asset value of $548 million and disbursements of $22 million).

Beckman's favored descriptor for the kind of projects he wanted to fund was "cutting edge" science. Illinois Wesleyan University's project was a step or two removed from the cutting edge. We wanted a new state-of-the-art undergraduate science facility with ample research labs for students to be mentored by a committed faculty. But we didn't think it likely that much "cutting edge" research would be forthcoming. Still, Beckman was inclined to fund institutions with which he had been associated. Caltech had received funding for a major research institute that was to open in 1990, and the University of Illinois was to open its own Beckman Institute in 1989. Was IWU's location in Bloomington-Normal where Arnold had attended high school and played piano in the movie theatre, his mentorship under the IWU graduate Carl Marvel, would these connections be sufficient to spring loose fifteen or twenty million dollars from the Beckman Foundation? It was a long shot, but we felt it was worth taking.

Such was the high stakes game that we played during Wendell Hess's year as Acting President for the 1987-88 academic year. As Director of the Division of Natural Science since 1977, I was the faculty representative on the planning committee. Chaired by Hess, the Dean of Academic Affairs,

our committee also included Director of Development Dick Whitlock and Director of Planned Giving Ben Rhodes. The committee met, in closed sessions, on Monday mornings at 7:30 a.m. Over the course of several months, we developed a proposal for the Beckman Foundation of which I was author. Unfortunately, we received feedback from Stans that the proposal was likely to fail because the facility wasn't close enough to the "cutting edge."

Now, enter Minor Myers jr. Robert Eckley had served as president for eighteen years (1968-1986). He came to the University shortly after the most recent reaccreditation by the North Central Association had failed to award IWU a ten-year "clean bill of health" reaccreditation, and had awarded us just a five-year pass during which time we were put on notice that certain improvements were necessary.

A Harvard economist whose professional life had largely been at Caterpillar Tractor in Peoria, Illinois, Eckley was a man for the occasion, steadily building the endowment and the quality of the faculty throughout his presidency. Following Eckley's retirement, Wayne Anderson, from Maryville College in Tennessee, stepped aboard for two years when, rather suddenly, he announced his resignation. Wendell Hess, IWU Provost and Academic Dean, served as Acting President for an interim year while a new national search was mounted and pursued.

Minor, who was then the Provost and Dean at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, New York, was the successful candidate. In part because of uncertainties raised by Anderson's sudden announcement, the entire faculty was holding its collective breath. We had just passed through

three years in which our future as an institution became less than certain. What kind of leader were we about to get?

For me, the most urgent question was, what would the future hold for the science building project? I had first raised the need for a significant improvement in our science facilities at the President's five-year planning conference in 1980. Nine years had passed, and the need was still unmet.

I was greatly assured when, on September 13, 1989, Minor's Inaugural Address was devoted to the future of science education at Illinois Wesleyan. He cited recent National Science Foundation data on the "science pipeline," the shrinkage from the number of high school graduates each year to the final number who would achieve the Ph.D. The number was just one science and mathematics Ph.D. produced from each 412 students who entered high school. "The pipeline is a system which leaks all the way. Our tasks are then to expand the pipeline and fix the leaks," Minor said. " . . . we must enhance our science facilities so that an outstanding faculty and student body can prosper and feed the pipeline."

It sounded like a pledge to me, like a promise of his presidency to be fulfilled. A yardstick by which his competency to lead the University would be measured. And Minor delivered the goods. In fall 1989, we completed the Leadership Gift case statement. In February 1991, Minor, Bob Reardon of the Board who had been named Chair of the Campaign for the Center for the Natural Sciences Building, and I attended a meeting of Project Kaleidoscope's First National Colloquium, held at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington D.C., on the topic "What Works: Building Natural Science Communities."

We brought back to campus our enthusiasm seasoned by the ideas of national leaders in science education at the liberal arts colleges. We began a process of architect selection that resulted in visits to seventeen campuses to examine recent

science facilities. As a part of a group ranging from two to six campus representatives, I was the only participant to visit all seventeen sites. By summer 1991 we had identified a collaborative architectural team, in which as design architects Jack DeBartolo and colleagues at Anderson DeBartolo Pan, offices in Phoenix, Tucson, and San Francisco, was paired with Hastings and Chivetta of St Louis who would do construction documents and architectural supervision of construction. The project was on a roll.

Minor had not given up on the Beckman Foundation. Rather than picking up where the Hess-led committee had left things, Minor took his own patented approach to "the ask". Preferring to talk to the top man himself, Minor called on Beckman at his office on the University of California, Irvine campus. Although I have no detailed report, I'm sure that Minor had done his background research on Cullom Illinois, the Irvin Theatre in downtown Bloomington, popular films of the 1915-20 era, Carl Marvel, Cal Tech, the University of Illinois Beckman Institute, etc. I wouldn't be surprised if he might have tried to find one of the early pH meters made by Beckman Instruments. It would be like him to do so, and bring it along to give to Beckman in case he didn't still have one himself. The picture is, develop a personal relationship, don't ask for money. Not right away.

The evening of September 24, 1990, was a night to remember. Beckman was 90 years old, but still spry and active (he lived to 104). He had been invited to campus for dinner at the President's House, and was joined by a number of faculty from the sciences with a few humanists and music faculty to leaven the conversation. After dinner, Beckman was invited into the family room where a Steinway was located. Minor had collected a variety of sheet music from the 1915-20 period that was propped up on the piano's music rack. Beckman was invited to sit down at the piano and to play a

bit, from memory if he chose, or to try his hand at anything that looked familiar in the assembled sheet music. Beckman beamed. He was entirely up to the task, and began to play some of his favorite tunes from memory.

At this point, a quartet of students from the School of Music entered the room and gathered around the piano. They had rehearsed a number of songs with which Beckman might have been acquainted. He seemed to recognize most of them, and the quartet was in fine voice that night.

How can I best express it: a ninety-year-old man having the time of his life. He had sold his business enterprise during the last decade for 800 million dollars, and had already given away more than a hundred million of it. But that night he was back at the piano at the Irvin Theatre, playing for the silent films again. The nostalgia ran thick. The next day, at the President's Convocation, Beckman was awarded an honorary degree.

The moral of this story is that for Minor, his approach was, "You do what you can do, what you're good at, and I'll do what I can do, what I'm good at. Maybe we'll hit a perfect harmony. If not, too bad, maybe we can try again another time." And that night Minor was doing what he could do well. It didn't spring loose a major gift for our science project, but a smaller gift, of half a million dollars for science, and then a few years later a similar gift for The Ames Library. You win some and you loose some. No, you win some and you WIN some. When you're losing, just stick your fingers in your ears and leave. I'll elaborate on that strategy a little later.

Science? We raised the money elsewhere, the largest gift coming from Bloomington-based insurance company State Farm. The building design was completed by winter 1993, groundbreaking occurred in May of that year, and the building was occupied in October 1995. Task completed. Minor had measured up to his self-imposed yardstick.

Chapter 2

A Numbers Man

Bob Eckley had established the tradition of a summer planning conference with his Cabinet. It was always a two-day event, the first day with his Cabinet composed of the heads of Academic Affairs, Development, Admissions, and Student Affairs, and the Assistant to the President. The eight Division and School Directors of the academic program joined the group for cocktails and dinner, and for the second day discussions. As I assumed the role of director of the Division of Natural Science in 1977, I joined the second day program from that point on.

The planning conferences (privately dubbed "Camp Runamuk" by some of the participants) were typically held at off-campus venues. The locations changed each year. On one occasion we met in facilities at Knox College in Galesburg, sharing rooms in the dorms. We also met one year at the Student Union on the University of Illinois campus. Other venues were the lodge at Starved Rock State Park and Jumer's in Peoria—all Central Illinois locations.

Minor convened the summer planning conference in late August 1989, within a month of his arrival on campus. He kept the meeting on campus, and it has remained on campus or at least in Bloomington-Normal ever since. By this time, in a new role as Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, I had joined the Cabinet as a full member.

With a new President on board, we didn't know exactly what to expect. I imagine we began by going around the table and making a brief presentation on current issues within our areas of responsibility. When Minor took the final turn, he handed out two tables of quantitative data. The first was titled IWU

"25 Year Trend Review," which consisted of annual data from 1964-5 through 1988-9 academic years presented in a vast matrix.

It was mostly student profile data: Enrollment by state of origin began the table, and included annual numbers from fourteen states. Oddly enough, Illinois data was not included. It had caught his eye that for the first five years, 1964-1969, New York students had averaged 46 per year. But in the most recent five year period, 1985-1989, the New York average had dropped below one per year. This was the kind of "trend" that drew Minor's attention, and not for positive reasons.

A second table was headed "Planning Matrix." This table began with student profile data (e.g. number of majors among the divisions and schools; applicants, acceptances, and matriculants for international students; number of National Merit Scholars; breakdown of high school class rank, attrition, and graduation rates at IWU, etc.) Then it moved on to faculty numbers by divisions and schools, full-time faculty, administrative staff, library (first and foremost, the volume count), development support from various sources, financial aid (percent receiving aid from all sources was 82.7 percent for 1988-9), and students attending graduate schools in various categories.

I think it is fair to say that we were all impressed with Minor's rapid mastery of such a broad range of University data. Up to this point, we had no idea we were getting a "numbers man." In fact, Minor turned out to *love* numbers. He loved charts and tables; he loved matrices. And he loved to set goals for numbers.

Minor had a good handle on the numbers at the top-flight liberal arts colleges of the East: Williams, Amherst, Swarthmore, and the rest of the top ten in the *U.S. News & World Report* annual college rankings. Not only was

IWU 25 Year Trend Review

Stud. Geo. Distrib.	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71	71-72	72-73	73-74	74-75	75-76	76-77	77-78	78-79	79-80	80-81	81-82	82-83	83-84	84-85	85-86	86-87	87-88	88-89	Avg
Connecticut	2	13	15	16	6	7	6	3	3	1	2	2	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	3.3
Indiana	26	28	22	26	26	20	17	8	9	10	7	4	5	7	9	9	10	18	25	23	26	24	25	28	34	17.8
Iowa	4	7	5	6	8	6	5	7	2	3	6	5	6	8	5	8	6	7	7	10	17	23	27	34	29	10.0
Maine	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Massachusetts	9	5	10	8	6	8	5	4	1	1	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	2.8
Missouri	26	20	24	24	23	21	17	13	11	11	11	11	8	16	24	26	25	27	25	30	33	43	43	38	34	23.4
New Hampshire	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
New Jersey	16	17	22	26	25	18	6	11	12	10	6	3	2	3	6	7	6	5	3	1	1	2	4	0	3	8.6
New York	37	41	53	53	45	30	22	18	12	8	3	1	3	2	3	4	1	2	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	13.6
Ohio	5	8	7	10	8	9	8	8	7	7	1	6	4	3	2	1	2	3	1	0	2	4	4	6	6	4.9
Pennsylvania	7	18	10	17	11	8	11	4	4	2	5	4	2	4	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	4.8
Texas	5	8	3	3	3	2	5	4	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	3	2	1	1	0	1	0	1.9
Vermont	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.1
Wisconsin	25	29	30	29	31	23	13	10	13	11	8	7	5	8	11	17	18	27	28	37	50	44	57	56	61	25.9
# of States Rep.	30	37	28	32	38	38	34	33	33	27	24	24	20	18	17	21	19	20	24	19	20	17	21	23	19	25.4
# Countries Rep.	8	6	7	7	9	7	8	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	8	13	10	11	9	6	5	5	7	13	26	8.9
Out-of-State Total	202	249	253	294	282	232	183	143	118	95	67	62	52	65	75	96	90	111	118	129	150	162	188	200	201	152.7
% of Total Enroll	14.9	17.0	16.3	18.7	17.7	13.7	10.8	8.3	6.8	5.5	4.1	3.7	3.0	3.8	4.6	5.8	5.3	6.4	7.1	7.7	9.1	10.2	11.0	11.5	11.5	9.4
International Total	9	7	9	8	9	9	9	7	0	8	9	8	8	8	9	10	11	16	15	10	7	5	9	25	49	11.0
College of Liberal Arts	904	997	1043	1046	1047	1129	1129	1165	1182	1165	1118	1134	1152	1169	1136	1197	1219	1259	1201	1204	1205	1181	1351	1387	1431	1166.0
School of Nursing	120	122	145	175	188	192	179	193	200	205	205	192	201	188	175	174	192	196	198	207	194	181	167	157	131	179.1
College of Fine Arts	332	348	363	354	361	367	385	369	361	349	319	353	353	349	327	296	281	271	238	223	206	194	174	171	163	300.3
School of Music	175	182	186	182	181	180	189	181	195	189	177	196	197	182	185	156	134	120	112	110	104	98	90	91	93	155.4
School of Art	97	95	94	88	90	98	100	93	86	81	63	65	65	74	55	43	54	59	58	59	51	41	38	37	34	68.7
School of Drama	60	71	83	84	90	89	96	95	80	79	79	92	91	93	87	97	93	92	68	54	51	55	46	43	36	76.2
Music Theatre																			29	35	36	32	24	21	25	28.9
Total Enrollment (Fall)	1356	1467	1551	1575	1596	1688	1693	1727	1743	1719	1642	1679	1706	1706	1638	1667	1692	1726	1666	1669	1641	1588	1716	1736	1750	1653.5
Rate of Attrition (%)							19.6	18.4	14.2	13.1	11.1	11.5	12.6	14.2	13.0	11.5	11.1	11.2	11.9	10.8	11.3	11.1	8.0	8.0	7.0	
Total Applications							998	1051	941	989	1284	1277	1397	1453	1408	1458	1403	1611	1800	1707	1661	1756	1688	1659	2096	1454.6
Total Accepted							797	861	768	817	1004	978	1074	1108	1107	1175	1128	1203	1352	1367	1316	1402	1378	1233	1305	1124.9
% Accepted							79.9	81.9	81.6	82.6	78.2	76.6	76.9	76.3	78.6	80.6	80.4	74.7	75.1	80.1	79.2	79.8	81.6	74.3	62.3	77.9
Total Contracts							537	546	516	537	539	568	571	551	518	557	546	555	515	549	512	520	611	525	482	539.7
Conversion Rate							67.4	63.4	67.2	65.7	53.7	58.1	53.2	49.7	46.8	47.4	48.4	46.1	38.1	40.2	38.9	37.1	44.3	42.6	36.9	49.7
AVG ACT							22.5	23.3	23.7	24.3	24.2	23.4	24.9	23.5	24.3	23.5	23.4	24.1	23.8	24.1	24.4	24.4	24.7	25.1	25.8	24.1
AVG SAT							925	940	951	999	986	942	1027	944	999	944	942	983	953	983	1002	1002	1019	1041	1130	985
Pricing over 10 years				80-81	% Incr	81-82	% Incr	82-83	% Incr	83-84	% Incr	84-85	% Incr	85-86	% Incr	86-87	% Incr	87-88	% Incr	88-89	% Incr	89-90				
Tuition and Fees				4,432	9.8%	4,867	9.9%	5,347	8.3%	5,790	7.1%	6,200	7.4%	6,660	8.0%	7,194	8.5%	7,804	8.0%	8,425	8.9%	9,175				
Room				825	10.9%	915	10.4%	1,010	7.9%	1,090	6.9%	1,165	6.9%	1,245	8.0%	1,345	6.7%	1,435	8.0%	1,550	11.0%	1,720				
Board				1,060	9.0%	1,155	10.0%	1,270	6.7%	1,355	5.9%	1,435	4.9%	1,505	2.0%	1,535	0.0%	1,535	0.0%	1,535	0.0%	1,535				
Total Cost				6,317	9.8%	6,937	9.9%	7,627	8.0%	8,235	6.9%	8,800	6.9%	9,410	7.1%	10,074	6.9%	10,774	6.8%	11,510	8.0%	12,430				
CPI - SERVICES									4.8%		5.6%		5.7%		5.2%		4.6%		5.0%		6.0%					
CPI-All G&S									3.8%		4.0%		3.8%		1.1%		4.4%		4.4%							
Endowment																										
Market Value (October)														21.5	23.5	25.3	28.4	30.6	30.3	38.9	36	40.4	47.4	56.3	64.3	

PLANNING MATRIX
(November 15, 1989)

	88-89	89-90	90-91	91-92	92-93	93-94
Enrollment						
Liberal Arts	1419	1418				1185
Music	93	94				160
Art	32	42				70
Drama	36	43				80
Music Theatre	25	26				35
Nursing	127	108				170
Total Enrollment	1732	1731				1700(+2%)
Freshman Profile						
Applicants(International Students)	1772(324)	1918(512)				2100(600)
Accepted(International Students)	1253(52)	1182(62)				1029(72)
% Accepted(International Students)	70.1%(16.0%)	61.6%(12.1%)				49.0%(12.0)
Enrolled	482	464				490(20)
# National Merit Scholars (IWU)	3	2				
% in Top 10% of Class	53.0%	50.0%				
% in Top 25% of Class	77.0%	80.0%				
% in Top 50% of Class	100.0%	100.0%				
% from Public Schools	89.0%					
Average SAT	1130	1163				1200
Average ACT Composite	25.8	25.8				27
Undergraduate Profile(Fall)						
Attrition Rate 87-88	7.0%	6.1%				7.0%
Graduation Rate (4 years)	71.0%	74.0%				75.0%
% Grad School w/in 5 yrs	25.0%					
% of State Residents	85.7%	84.3%				
% of Out-of-State	11.5%	12.4%				
% Out of Country	2.8%	3.3%				
% Transfers	4.0%	4.9%				
% Asian-American	2.2%	2.4%				
% Black	1.6%	1.9%				
% Hispanic	0.7%	0.9%				
% American Indian or Eskimos	0.3%	0.3%				
% Women	56.0%	56.0%				
% Minority	4.7%	5.5%				
% of International Students	3.0%	3.3%				

PLANNING MATRIX
(November 15, 1989)

	88-89	89-90	90-91	91-92	92-93	93-94
% Liv in Univ/Greek Housing	89.9%	86.8%				
# Living in University Housing	1128	1094				
# Living in Greek Housing	429	408				
# of Off-Campus	175	229				
# States/Teritories Represented	19	22				
# of Countries Represented	26	28				
Staffing						
# FT Faculty (Headcount)						
Liberal Arts	72	77	80	82	84	86
Library	6	6				
Physical Education (Women&Men)	8	8				
Music	18	18				
Art	5	5				
Drama	4	4				
Nursing	14	14				
Total	127	132				
Faculty(FTE) - PT (#)						
Liberal Arts	5.7(20)	5.6(25)				
Library	0(0)	0(0)				
Physical Education (Women&Men)	0(8)	0(9)				
Music	3.6(15)	3.4(15)				
Art	.43(2)	.43(2)				
Drama	.86(5)	1.4(4)				
Nursing	.71(5)	1(3)				
Total	11.3(55)	11.8(58)				
Faculty Attrition						
Administrative						
Administrative Staff	45	46				
Office/Clerical	51	52				
Physical Plant	57	58				
Total	153	156				
Administrative Attrition						

Illinois Wesleyan outside the top ten, but we weren't even participating in the National Liberal Arts Colleges list. Thus the task Minor foresaw quickly doubled: first we needed to get our classification in the Carnegie Classification system shifted so that our arts and sciences programs would receive new emphasis; only then could we begin to work on getting our ranking within the national liberal arts colleges moving up to the prestige level he wanted to pursue.

In order to be a true national college, Minor pointed out that we needed a national student body. But Illinois Wesleyan was drawing 85 percent of its students from the state of Illinois. What we needed to do was to drop our Illinois matriculants from 85 percent to something below fifty percent, making up the difference with growth among students from New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. In the 1960s our enrollment was drawing three percent from New York alone. Now it was effectively zero. What happened? What went wrong? The University was stronger now than it was then. Why couldn't it draw the national students?

Dean of Admissions Jim Ruoti was on the hot seat. He attempted to explain himself and the admissions strategy he had crafted over the past twenty years of which he was justifiably proud. He was not to be convinced that Minor's vision of a newly shaped student body was either achievable or desirable. He battled back with a number of points:

1. Unlike the small states of New England, Illinois is large; overlay the map of Illinois and it will cover Philadelphia, all of New Jersey, New York City, Long Island, the Hudson River Valley, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Boston, and all of Massachusetts; most of Vermont; and

New Hampshire—seven states or more. Counting states of origin doesn't make any sense.

2. Illinois is a net exporter of college students. The Chicago suburbs are prime recruiting ground for the best colleges in the country. It makes no sense to spurn the quality that is in our own back yard.

3. Surveys show that college students are most likely to attend campuses within 150 miles of home; attrition goes up with distance from home. Recruiting students from distant states will push up attrition.

4. Our admissions staff visits most of the high schools in the state; we're known to the high school college counselors. We will damage our reputation, perhaps irreparably, if we drop our relationships with Illinois schools to attempt building new relationships across the country.

5. Over 80 percent of our students receive financial aid. The Illinois Monetary Award Program (MAP) is available only to in-state students. With the same need profile for an out-of-state student, we will either have to gap their aid significantly, or come up with our own financial resources to meet need.

I am probably forgetting half of the arguments Ruoti offered for retaining the admissions strategy in effect at that time. Minor, however, was relentless. After all, the argument was clear and compelling. Really, it was a syllogism. The top liberal arts colleges have national student bodies. Illinois Wesleyan wants to become a recognized top liberal arts college. Therefore, we need to develop a national student body.

In Cabinet meetings, he would sometimes issue ultimatums. "Next year, Jim, no more than 50 percent Illinois matriculants.

Period." In private, however, he would soften. Ruoti would implore, "Minor, it can't be done. We don't have the national apps, and our conversion on the ones we do have is low." It is hard not to believe that Minor understood this. But he wanted to advocate for his vision, because he believed in it, and thus it would be his public stance.

And it wasn't very many years before Admissions had adopted a strategy of recruiting in "focused areas of opportunity;" Seattle-Portland for music students; Denver and Colorado Springs, Phoenix, Atlanta, Cincinnati, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Milwaukee, and St. Louis—actually, quite a few locations around the country. It has made a small dent in the national presence among the student body, but we are nowhere near 50 percent out-of-state, even now, twenty-five years later[3].

As time passed, we became accustomed to Minor's near-fetish with numbers. It seemed less sophisticated than first impressions had led many of us to believe. Minor appeared never to have had a course in statistics—I never heard him mention inferential statistics at all, and the deepest he seemed to go was to simple arithmetic averages. In fact, his numbers of choice were not the "real" numbers used in calculations, but simple ordinals (i.e. "first," "second," third," etc.)

Ordinals are the numbers in rank orders, and he was most interested in firsts, or top tens in larger sets. How the rankings were achieved was of secondary importance. A good illustration of his naiveté regarding even the simplest of calculations occurred in Cabinet one day. Drawing on the increased revenue stream from the growing student body, Provost Janet McNew had been increasing the size of the faculty by two or three a year for several years. However,

the student-faculty ratio didn't seem to be decreasing—a desirable effect to enhance our rankings—as much as might be expected.

That was because, if you gave Ruoti a target of size N for the next year's entering class, he would invariably bring in a class of N + 20. Over five years, that would increase the size of the student body by 100. From 1,650 students under the Eckley administration, we were up to 1,900 or so at the time of this episode. Minor burst out with his solution: Reduce the size of the student body to 1,600 and we would instantly approximate his goal of a student/faculty ratio of 10:1.

He seemed to propose this strategy with all seriousness, and only reluctantly surrendered it when explicitly challenged with the point that, with the University's budget being quite dependent on tuition revenue, a reduction of 300 students would reduce tuition revenue by several million dollars. There was no way we could pay for the enhanced faculty positions with this substantial cut in tuition revenues. Minor was wise enough not to bring up this idea again.

Back at the time when I held the position of Director of Science Programs, a faculty member approached me with his solution to a problem that was of deep concern to him. He had come to the viewpoint that the faculty salary schedule at Illinois Wesleyan, top to bottom, was seriously deficient, and he knew how to fix it. "Just take a one-time hit on the endowment and increase everyone's salary by ten thousand dollars," he said. He seemed not to recognize that a major increase in salaries would not be a "one-time hit" at all. Instead, an increase in salaries would permanently increase the salary budget, year after year, and that money would

need to come from somewhere other than a "one-time" hit on the endowment.

It seems like a simple enough implication of his proposal, and one might wonder how someone on the science division faculty could fall into such an error. It was especially surprising to me, because it was a mathematics professor who made the proposal. So Minor was not alone in occasionally committing a numerical blunder.

Chapter 3

A Passion for Music

If the lack of a library of sufficient stature was a problem at Illinois Wesleyan that Minor aimed to remedy, the existence of a first-rate school of music was a bonus that he had not enjoyed at either Connecticut or Hobart and William Smith colleges. Being a pianist and harpsichordist himself, he had an immediate affinity for the IWU School of Music. His affection for music—for all things, really—was placed in the eighteenth century, and so the harpsichord was dearest to his heart.

The School of Music already possessed a harpsichord, which had been purchased with part of the insurance settlement following the tragic fire in Presser Hall that occurred in the early 1970s. Bedford Watkins was the pianist most interested in early music, and he had guided the purchase of a harpsichord and another early keyboard instrument, perhaps a clavichord, both of modern build. Bedford occasionally played them in Westbrook Auditorium recitals.

In his first year as president, perhaps even in his first semester, Minor wrote a grant to the Mellon Foundation, requesting funds under a "New College Presidents" program, as I understood it, providing new presidents with a fund to take special initiatives that might not find funding through existing budgetary allocations.

Finding the existing harpsichord to be unsatisfactory, immediately he selected a harpsichord described in a School of Music recital program as "a new Taskin style harpsichord crafted by Hubbard and Broeckman (Boston)

which was founded by Frank Hubbard, father of the modern harpsichord. The instrument is painted in the traditional French style, with interior and exterior colors reconciled by gold leaf bands on the case and lid. It has a trestle stand with tapered legs. The double-manual harpsichord possesses a five octave range, three ranks of jacks, and three choirs of strings, 2x8', 1x4', with a shove coupler. The keyboard is a replica of an eighteenth century original." I would bet a nickel that Minor himself wrote this piece of text for the program. Now, *this* was an instrument of which the University could be proud.

In February 1993, in a dedicatory event for the new harpsichord, Minor invited Igor Kipnis to campus for the better part of a week to play the new instrument. At the time Kipnis was perhaps the preeminent harpsichordist in the nation, if not the world. Over his career he made a total of 106 recordings, 93 of which were solo performances. For Illinois Wesleyan he gave a concert in Westbrook Auditorium and probably other events, but perhaps in a moment of sentiment overflowing for the new instrument, Kipnis with Minor's assistance had the harpsichord moved to the Berthoff Commons where at dinner one evening, amid the clatter of food trays and lively chatter, he played for the students. I'm not sure what the students made of it, but I spoke to Kipnis the next day and he honestly seemed to have enjoyed the experience.

In early November 1989, Minor put his unmistakable imprint on plans for a 300th anniversary performance of Henry Purcell's opera, *Dido and Aeneas*. Several liberal arts faculty prefaced the performance with remarks on "Taste of the Time, 1689." Jim McGowan of the English department read three poems, accompanied by a brass quartet, and Mike Young

from history spoke on the question of "Political Innuendo, or Moralistic Instruction?" Minor himself provided harpsichord accompaniment on a recitative and aria from the opera, performed by student vocalists and the Wesleyan chamber orchestra, the Camarata, conducted by Vadim Mazo, music professor.

Minor was captivated when the University hired a new musicologist, Michael Cooper, who was a Mendelssohn scholar. Cooper's presence on the campus was timely, as the 150th anniversary of Mendelssohn's death was approaching, and Cooper soon enlisted Minor's support for a major international Mendelssohn conference. The conference, titled *The Mendelssohns at the Millennium*, occurred March 6-9, 1997, with scholarly papers presented as well as performances of Mendelssohn's works, some of which our musicologist had unearthed and brought into their first performances since Mendelssohn himself was alive.

This event wouldn't have occurred without Minor's active involvement; the conference proceedings edited by Cooper and IWU German professor Julie Prandi and titled *The Mendelssohns: Their Music in History* (Oxford University Press, 2002), heaped praise on Minor's contributions to the success of the conference. The preface read: "Thanks are due first and foremost to IWU and especially to its president, Dr. Minor Myers, jr, whose boundless enthusiasm and support contributed immensely to the atmosphere of excitement and discovery that the festival provided for participants and guests alike." Among his contributions to the conference, Minor was able to bring in outside funding that covered many of the

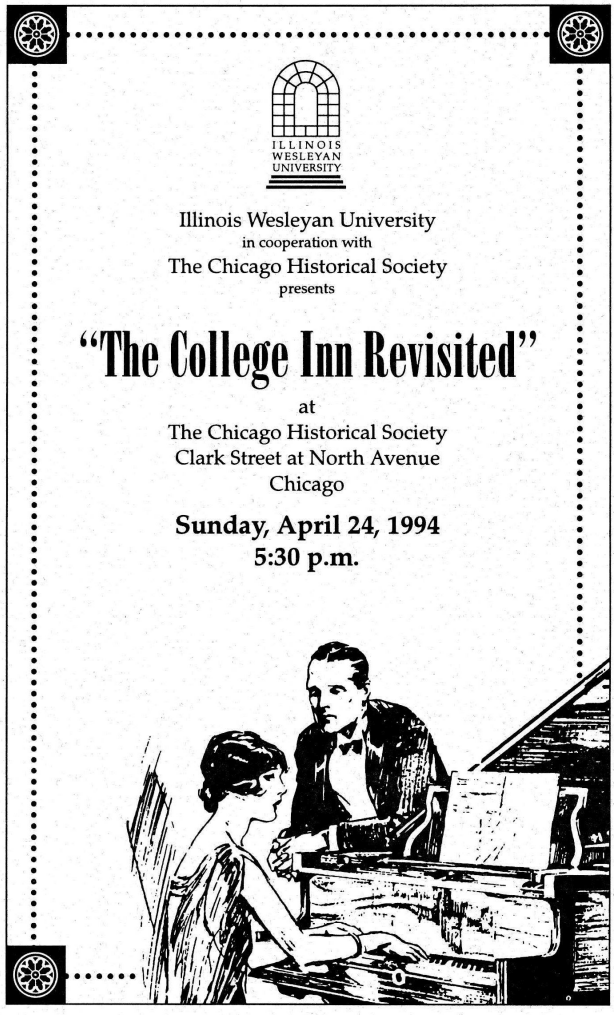
expenses of supporting the coterie of international scholars and experts who participated on the program.

On at least two occasions, Minor played harpsichord and piano before audiences in Chicago. On one occasion, he performed in a Concerto grosso with the IWU Camarata for an alumni event, held at the Art Institute.[4] The reviews I have heard of Minor's keyboard skills have not been overwhelmingly appreciative. He appears to have been an "advanced novice"[5] rather than an accomplished artist. Perhaps this is due to the fact that his dedication to practicing seemed to be episodic: If he was pursuing something musical, he would practice diligently, but if something else caught his attention, his interests would shift and his commitment to the keyboard would languish.

In November 1997, Minor and other Illinois Wesleyan faculty performed at the Chicago Humanities Festival VIII. The program was titled, "Renaissance Men and Women Redux." Three works were performed—"Sonata in E Minor (IX)" by Frederick II (1712-1786), "King of Prussia; Trio Sonata No. 6 in A Major" by Frederick William Herschel (1738-1822), British composer and astronomer; and "Flute Sonata" by Lita Grier, a contemporary Chicago composer whose tie-in with the Renaissance was that she maintained a career in arts management and classical music FM radio along with composition—that is, like Frederick II and Herschel, she was "multitalented." Minor played piano for the first two pieces. His name is under the title on the program, and he made prefatory remarks before the performances.

In another vein, Minor is credited with writing "an original musical play," *The College Inn Revisited*, which was performed by Wesleyan students with support from various faculty, an

event presented to the Chicago chapter of the IWU Alumni Association at the facilities of the Chicago Historical Society. Located in the Sherman Hotel, the College Inn restaurant had been a mecca of the Chicago jazz scene during the 1920s. On April 24, 1994, the IWU production was performed by five student actors in lead parts, nine others in vocal and dance numbers, and a ten-piece instrumental ensemble.



According to the *Argus* review, "the musical chronicles the movement of different characters through Chicago and their experiences at the College Inn."

A news release stated that the play chronicled "the relationship between producer Charles K. Harris and writer-performer Joe E. Howard. Howard was a vaudeville showman in the 1890s and a major creative force in Chicago musical theater, producing scores for 22 shows between 1903-13. Harris published most of them, including Howard's best-known song, 'I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now . . .' which remained Howard's signature song until his death on stage during a 1961 performance."

It is hard not to assume that the performance of "It Had to Be You," a wonderful old standard written in 1924 by Isham Jones (who led the house band at the College Inn) and Gus Kahn that has been recorded by Billie Holliday, Frank Sinatra, Barbra Streisand, Tony Bennett, and Harry Connick Jr among others, was the hit of the show.[6] So far, I have been unable to locate anyone able to share a script, although Linda Farquharson, professor of music, tells me that she recalls the show being in the genre of a musical review, the dialog serving more to patch together the songs than being a fully plotted drama.

Perhaps the closest I will come to understanding the creation of this piece of music theater can be found in a blog piece titled "Where genius comes from".[7] In a blog entry that seems to have been stimulated by the death of Steve Jobs, IWU alumnus Scott Fenstermaker wrote, "There was one apocryphal story of Myers finding part of an original musical score by a lesser-known artist at some kind of flea market, and working with the music department to finish and produce

the piece. That story is a good demonstration of the heart and nature of the man." Apocryphal, yes: My bet is that Minor found the various pieces of music at said flea markets but originated the script himself as he worked the music into a unified whole through the powers of his own imagination. If a script ever turns up, we shall find the truth.

Although he didn't note it on his curriculum vitae, Minor was also the creator of the 1998 *Illinois Wesleyan University Song Book*. The book would not have been created without the energy he put into it. The softcover book presents the music and lyrics to "Tribute to Wesleyan" (1900), "Wesleyan Loyalty Song" (1905), "Wesleyan Cheer Song" (1910-11), "Campus Song" (1906), "Fight Wesleyan!" (1911), "Wesleyan Will!" (1927), and "Alma Wesleyana" (1935) among a few others.

Minor also wrote a nine-page introduction, which explained the provenance of each song. There we learn among many other little-known facts that "Campus Song," though written for "Wesleyan," actually celebrates the other Wesleyan, the one in Connecticut. The *Song Book* included a CD recording of all the music in the book, performed by six Illinois Wesleyan performance groups, from Titan Band and Wind Ensemble to Sine Nomine Singers, and In Sync, a group of five young men from the class of 2000 who started singing together as freshmen, one of several a cappella groups that invented themselves on campus over the Myers years. It all was a joyful frolic through the University's past, the sort of thing Minor engaged in more studiously in his collaboration first with Bob Aaron, then Carl Teichman, to create the

sesquicentennial history of IWU titled *Illinois Wesleyan University: Continuity & Change 1850-2000*.

In preparing this document, I did not avail myself of the many opportunities to interview people who knew Minor. My excuse was that I didn't want to change the tone of my manuscript from personal reflections to a research study. Additionally, midstream in my writing, I learned that Meg Miner, archivist at The Ames Library, was at work on an oral history of Minor's years at Illinois Wesleyan that was focused on his book collecting. I didn't want to infringe on her territory by tagging around and re-interviewing her interlocutors.

Nonetheless, I became so engaged with some of the details regarding Minor's musical involvements at Illinois Wesleyan that I did eventually meet with Music Professor Vadim Mazo, violinist par excellence and conductor of the Camarata, for an hour-long interview. I did not come equipped with a recording device, and my written record of the interview is a bit sketchy. Yet my notes were still useful, and it turned out to be a fascinating and productive hour.

On June 21, 2016, I met with Mazo in his Presser Hall office. The next day Nancy and I were flying to California to visit our daughter and her family. By the time I would be returning, Mazo would have left for Europe for a series of performances, something he did many times over the years. I had wanted to talk to him about the Camarata concert in Chicago when Minor had played harpsichord. Although interviews were not part of my intended agenda, I wanted to get more details on Minor's musical activities, and Mazo was a key partner in

whatever Minor achieved in this dimension of his life. But getting together with him had proved elusive.

For one thing, Mazo's wife Galina had died unexpectedly on March 30, 2016—the very day her third grandchild was born. When I finally contacted Mazo, he was about to take a trip to San Francisco for a memorial family dinner on Galina's birthday, May 30, where he would see his new grandchild for the first time. Then he needed to prep for his tour. He was still grieving. His life was complicated with a maze of commitments.

Nonetheless we agreed to meet on the morning before my own departure. Despite the complications in his life, Mazo seemed glad to see me. Never particularly close, we had occasionally run into each other in the campus faculty dining room for many brief conversations. Once as he pleaded his inadequacies with the English language, I helped him prepare a sabbatical leave proposal. I was glad to do it—and he got the sabbatical.

Mazo's office was spacious yet crammed with the memorabilia of 30-years on our faculty. Colorful posters advertising both the Camarata and his own performances in recital adorned walls and cabinet doors. An especially large poster was written in Chinese, with "Vadim Mazo" jumping out from, what were for me, strings of indecipherable Chinese characters. Others were from European tours, from the Camarata performing in the Weill Recital Hall at New York's Carnegie Hall and other venues. On a shelf was a small, framed photograph of Minor and Mazo comparing violins. The room was rich with

artifacts of Mazo's musical life. But the scent of Minor was also in the air.

Vadim spent our hour together reminiscing spontaneously, not altogether organized but from the heart. If I had an initial concern that Minor might have been something of a pest, interfering with Mazo's own agenda for the Camarata, that notion was quickly dispelled. Mazo characterized Minor as exhibiting "pure enthusiasm and sincerity" in his musical interests. As if to illustrate his point, Vadim went to a cabinet and took out a somewhat tattered holograph of Sir William Herschel's Concerto No. 5 in A Minor for violin and string orchestra, dated 1760, that Minor had dug out of the archives at the University of California, Berkeley. The Camarata performed the piece—Mazo himself perhaps the soloist. Minor had personally tracked down the score at Berkeley, no doubt the original and only existing copy, in Herschel's own hand, had it photocopied, and brought it back to share with Mazo. This was the kind of man he was, the explorer, the investigator, the sleuth, but most of all the generous spirit.

What was Mazo's assessment of Minor's actual keyboard skills? Here, the assessment converged on the earlier appraisal I had heard. Mazo called Minor "a very enthusiastic amateur—rank 6 or 7 on a scale of 10." He tried very hard, Mazo observed, despite persistent rhythmic difficulties. A few hours of individual instruction from Igor Kipnis during his visit to IWU had little lasting effect, and Minor never chose to formally study with a member of the Illinois Wesleyan faculty.

Regarding Minor's collecting of musical instruments, Mazo immediately mentioned Dodd bows. It seems Minor owned

several, along with some dozens of violins and violas mainly by English makers. But Mazo pointed out that, were he evaluating instruments, his attention would focus on the sound of the instrument, its timbre, whether the tone was round and full or hard and severe, in short, the musicality of the instrument's voice. But for Minor, who had only the most rudimentary skills as a string player, and bought instruments at auction via mail or phone bids without ever auditioning the instruments, he was never happier than with an instrument dated 1789 or a similarly important historical date. It was an entirely unique—and musically, quite foreign— approach in Mazo's opinion.

And I learned a bit more about the Camarata performance in Chicago. In a phone conversation some weeks earlier, I had told Mazo I wanted to track down the program for the Camarata performance in Chicago where Minor had played harpsichord before an audience. I asked him whether he recalled the piece Minor had performed. Mazo replied, "Concerto grosso." I was not familiar enough with the designation to ask an intelligent follow-up, but in checking later I learned that perhaps hundreds of compositions are so described. The term, generically, means a concerto in which rather than a solitary soloist a small group of instruments join in the role of the soloist.

Corelli, Vivaldi, Handel, and Bach all composed in some cases complete collections of concerti grossi, and even in the twentieth century concerti grossi have been written by composers ranging from Stravinsky to Philip Glass. When this topic entered our June 21 conversation, Mazo said he wasn't sure but it was probably Vivaldi's "Concerto in D Minor" or the Handel "Concerti Grossi Op. 6" (the news release shows

it was the Handel). And then he added an anecdote that typified everything that was so endearing about Minor.

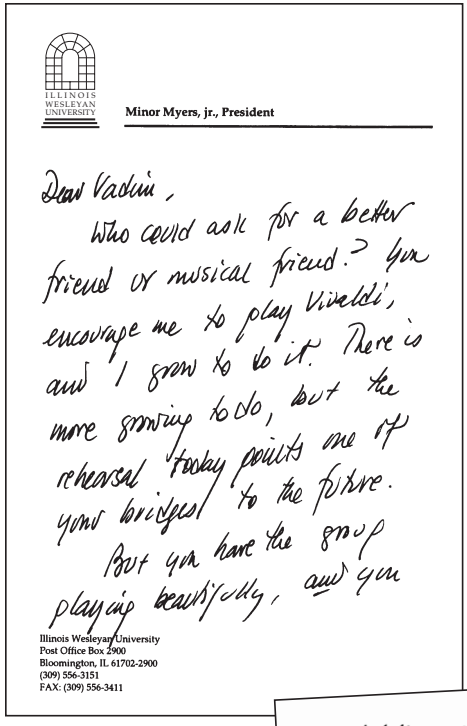
The concert ended with a performance of Haydn's "Symphony No. 45," the "Farewell Symphony." Apparently Prince Nikolaus Ezsterházy, Haydn's patron at the time, had moved from Eisenstadt to his summer palace in rural Hungary, bringing his entire orchestra with him. The vacation, which had begun in May, went on for week after week and was finally approaching its scheduled end in late October, when Ezsterházy announced that they would be staying for two additional months. This was a bit much for members of the orchestra to take, as they had left their families back in Eisenstadt and were anxious at long last to return. Some of them spoke to Haydn and asked if he could do something about it.

Apparently Haydn was just completing his 45th symphony at the time, and perhaps he made an alteration in the fourth movement to express the orchestra's desire to return home. As the movement progresses, a brief solo part played by the first oboe and second horn is followed by these two musicians getting up, blowing out the candles on their music stands, and leaving the performance. Such continues throughout the remainder of the movement until only the conductor (Hayden himself) and the concertmaster remain in almost total darkness. Thus the "Farewell Symphony" ends. It seems Ezsterházy got the point, as later in the evening of the symphony's first performance of the work he announced that the orchestra would be returning to Eisenstadt the next day.

The chances are that few if any among the anticipated Chicago alumni in attendance would have an acquaintance with Haydn's "Farewell Symphony", but that did not

dissuade Minor from pursuing as accurate a recreation as possible of Haydn's 1772 performance in the Camarata's 1992 performance of the symphony. The loan of a set of candlesticks from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra was arranged and, after initial reservations expressed by the Art Institute about so many open flames in a building holding their priceless art collection, permission was granted and the performance occurred as authentically as could be done. It was a quintessential Minor Myers moment, to be sure.

Among his musings that were so imbued with a deeply felt sense of loss, perhaps blending uncontrollably with his own recent personal loss, Mazo told me of the many notes that Minor had sent him over the years. These were all somewhere, he knew, but seemed not readily at hand in his office—futilely he thumbed through papers cramming a file drawer beyond its capacity but could find nothing. He was able to share with me only a single hand-written note perhaps possessing a special significance for him, and I further share it here.



ILLINOIS WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

Minor Myers, jr., President

Dear Vadim,

Who could ask for a better friend or musical friend? You encourage me to play Vivaldi, and I grow to do it. There is more growing to do, but the rehearsal today points me at your bridges to the future.

But you have the group playing beautifully, and you were totally amazing at Heartland. The whole thing was completely impressive. I see now more clearly a musical genius of real inspiration bringing others to do good things on two continents. How much we all must thank you. Sunday was superb.

Prof Maze

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Chapter 4

Minor's Multitalented Project

Minor wanted to see the School of Music thrive and prosper, increasing its number of students. He was not happy with the Music Education program; what he wanted to see were music performance majors, who would be trained to a level gaining them chairs in the major orchestras and on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera and opera houses throughout Europe. (Nothing could have made him happier than to find that in one season alone, five Illinois Wesleyan alums were performing at the Metropolitan Opera.)

Nonetheless, Minor did have a practical side. Noting the outstanding reputation of the Department of Biology and its production of medical school admits, it occurred to him that the key thing might be to attract students who would *double* major in, say, biology and music. Such students might have been studying piano or violin since they were six, but were set on becoming M.D.s. What more perfect place to attend college than Illinois Wesleyan!

To bring his idea to fruition, a new effort in admissions was required, touting the supportive environment for the *multitalented student*. In an article titled "Packing for College," published in the May 2003 *National Consortium of Specialized Schools of Mathematics, Science & Technology Journal*, Minor wrote:

> "Students heading to college may hesitate with a question: Does my future lie in narrowing my focus to one subject, or in maintaining the multiple interests which have been so rewarding through school? Sadly,

> narrowness often wins, and the violin or flute is left at home as the student heads off for four focused years of serious physics or history. There's another view . . . [and here Minor introduces the term 'polymath,' someone who achieves or approaches expertise or creativity in two or more separate fields]. There has been a recent trend to multiple majors, as students have thought they will make themselves more interesting for employers. They are not necessarily interested in these subjects, just qualifying for jobs. Some liberal arts colleges are actively discouraging this pattern, which is far different from real polymath propensities . . . The double major seeking a job operates from a cold technique, while the polymath may pursue the same subjects with deep, lively interest. It is a pattern which makes a great difference for creative potential."

Minor used the term "multitalented" early on, but in his private thoughts it was "polymath." Perhaps he avoided using the term much on the Illinois Wesleyan campus because the ill-informed might take "polymath" to mean "mathematician studying polynomials" or some such. But for Minor, it was all about passion, two or even more passions, cross-fertilizing and each enriching the others.

Minor did his part in pushing the multitalented agenda. He directed the Admissions Office to develop a brochure on the multitalented student. He conducted a special session for the multitalented as part of the Faculty Open House program for prospective students and their families. And importantly, he brought to campus a succession of speakers and University guests who were of the multitalented if not of the pure

polymathic ilk. They served as role models for us all. Several examples come readily to mind.

In September 1994, the University sponsored a multi-day visit by Sir Edward Heath, former British Prime Minister (1970-1974). The multitalented mix that caught Minor's attention was, first, his experience and knowledge of British politics (he gave a lecture on campus and met with political science classes); second, his musical interests and success as a conductor, including under his baton the London Symphony Orchestra (at Illinois Wesleyan he conducted the Civic Symphony in a concert of Dvorak, Brahms, and Bruckner); and his experience collecting art, notably a set of 20 or more Japanese woodcuts by the artist Hiroshi Yoshida (he gave a special lecture showing slides of his collection in a Westbrook Auditorium talk). To this, I would have added his expertise as a yachtsman of international stature, having won the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race in 1969 with his yacht *Morning Cloud,* as well as winning the British Admiral's Cup in 1971. But maybe three talents was enough for one visit.

Carl Teichman has some tales to tell about the challenges in getting Sir Edward from England to the IWU campus. For starters, he insisted he must fly on the Concord supersonic jet, whose ticket prices were rather extraordinary. He needed to have a bottle of his preferred single-malt Scotch whisky, Glenmorangie, readily at hand on all appropriate occasions; and he required that kidneys be served for dinner. Of course, there was a substantial honorarium as well.

Everything went quite according to plan. I imagine the politics was the most engaging; he wasn't the most animated conductor I have ever seen, and the art lecture was a rather pedestrian one (e.g., "Notice the nice blend of colors in this

one," etc.). After most of the events were over, Minor had a dinner party at his house for Sir Edward, to which I was invited. Heath imbibed from his bottle of scotch while the rest of us were sipping our California merlot, and dinner was served buffet-style, with seating available both at the formal dining room table and the family room table, as well as at chairs here and there through the house, where side trays were located. When I had filled my plate—including two kidneys, which I had never tasted previously—I looked around for a place to sit. There was a fire in the living room fireplace and an empty chair, lo and behold, across from a solitary ex British Prime Minister.

That's how it began, my private dinner with the Prime Minister. As I looked down somewhat askance at my plate and the kidneys on it, I asked if I might join him. Sir Edward muttered a kind acceptance. I had never eaten a kidney before, and I couldn't help but remember the opening of Chapter 4 in Joyce's *Ulysses:* "Mr. Leopold Bloom ate with relish the inner organs of beasts and fowls. He liked thick giblet soup, nutty gizzards, a stuffed roast heart, liverslices fried with crustcrumbs, fried hencods' roes. Most of all he liked grilled mutton kidneys which gave to his palate a fine tang of faintly scented urine." As I worked up my nerve to take the first bite of kidney, I wondered if I too would experience that fine tang. Actually, not. The kidneys were mild and subtle. I could understand why Sir Edward liked them so much. They were entirely satisfying as I struck up a conversation with the Prime Minister.

A biographical note on Heath that I ran across says of him, "His personality was cold and aloof, annoying even to his friends," holding a not entirely promising prospect for dinner chit-chat. Nonetheless, we were able to carry on passably

well. He was pleased when I brought up yacht racing, having many fond recollections of his days on his yacht, the *Morning Cloud*.

At the time of our dinner, I had visited Japan in the previous year, and was curious concerning the back story of his interest in Yoshida, which was moderately interesting. We didn't talk politics at all. It was an hour well spent, from which I carried away my own odd lessons. Five or so years later, I was able to track down a Yoshida woodblock print from the "Inland Sea" series, and purchased it for a not unreasonable amount. And I reformed my notions of good Scotch whiskey, moving from Hudson's Bay Blended to Macallan's single malt, and Lagavulin as well.

I think this experience taught me something about Minor's fascination with the multitalented. At the time of his visit, Heath was in his upper seventies, and was experiencing a gradual general decline in his overall health. Although he had served as a parliamentary backbencher until 1991, he had left the Prime Minister's position in 1974, some twenty years earlier. No longer was he was a vital, lively presence, but rather more a specimen for the University community to admire, even revere, for what he had been. For his part, I'm sure Heath enjoyed the perks that followed from his noteworthy career; he was happy to make a visit to the American heartland. After all, Churchill had given a famous speech in the middle of Missouri.

Minor also contributed speakers for the newly created student research conference. In 1989, two junior faculty members—Wayne Dornan in neuropsychology and Gail Lima in marine biology—joined forces in creating the first Illinois Wesleyan University Student Research Conference. Thirty or so

students presented their research in poster presentations around the perimeter of the Memorial Center's Davidson Room, and half a dozen or so gave oral presentations of their work.

The event was scheduled for 7 p.m., and all told it was a success. Minor attended, and he was more than impressed. He wanted to do what he could to promote the conference as an annual event. His first mark was to rename it the John Wesley Powell Research Conference, in honor of John Wesley Powell, a professor at Illinois Wesleyan from 1865-1867, who Minor had concluded was the first faculty member in the nation to take students on field study excursions, in his case west to the Colorado River.

Minor's other contribution to the Powell Conference was to hand-select a number of keynote speakers over the years, all of whom exemplified his passion for the multitalented. Examples of his selections, which he made without consultation among the faculty coordinators of the conference, were Susan Kieffer and Steven Jay Gould. Kieffer was a graduate of Allegheny College with a Ph.D. in planetary sciences from Cal Tech. A MacArthur Fellow, she talked at lunch about volcanology, and later in the day about her program for science-based education developed at her own Kieffer Institute, an Arizona nonprofit developing curriculum material for at-risk K-12 students.

Gould, like Kieffer another MacArthur Fellow, was a liberal arts graduate of Antioch College with Ph.D. from Columbia. He spent most of his career teaching evolutionary biology at Harvard, a field where he is best known for the theory of punctuated equilibrium. As well, he wrote over 300 popular essays for the magazine *Natural History*, many of

which were collected and published as books, for which he won the National Book Award and the National Book Critics Circle Award. I had the privilege of chauffeuring Gould around Bloomington during his visit, from the airport to his accommodations at the Chateau Hotel, from the Chateau to campus, and return, which allowed ample opportunity to chat.

But the most memorable hand-selected keynote speaker for the conference was Chuck Pell. No one on campus had ever heard of Pell. Possibly, Minor had met him as a seatmate on an airplane, as sometimes happened. He was most fortunate in that regard. The TEDMED website describes Pell in the following terms:

> "A confessed 'congenital geek,' Chuck is inventor, artist, scientist, and expressive raconteur. As a practitioner of Design Coup d'œil (the habit of seeing overarching structural issues at a glance), Chuck seeks the essential core of any system, whether science, art, or technology. He is most at home in novel situations, figuring things out on the fly. These tendencies have led Chuck to garner experience in surgical robotics, functional morphology, biomechanics, fluid dynamics, miniature robotics, autonomous underwater vehicles, ballistics, maritime communications, entertainment effects, teaching, design (graphic, exhibit and industrial) and filmmaking."

We could be looking at another Leonardo, a true polymath. Education? Pell's degrees are a B.F.A. in Sculpture and Video from Western Michigan University and an M.F.A. in Sculpture and Painting from the University of Notre

Dame. His current position was Research Associate, Department of Biology, at Duke University. Sounds like a self-taught polymath.

Pell's keynote at our Powell Research Conference was titled "A Periodic Table of Things that Swim and Fly." He laid out a matrix (remember: Minor loved matrices) with dimensions related to flight and swimming, and then filled in the cells with examples both living and extinct of organisms that fit these characteristics. Quite a number of cells were left empty, there being no exemplars for these cases. His next step was to imagine what an organism might look like that would fill out the missing cells. It was all quite fascinating.

I can't quite make his grand finale connect with his talk, but it was clearly a capstone event. He started to talk about boomerangs, perhaps to illustrate that not everything that flies conforms to the "two wings that flap up and down in unison" definition. To best illustrate his point, he directed our attention to some strange little foam rubber cutouts on our tables that looked vaguely like oversized daisies, that were actually boomerangs. They required a special technique to throw properly, but they flew with alacrity and reliably returned to their launch sites. Soon the air of the Memorial Center Main Lounge was filled with flying daisies, thoughtfully constructed out of foam rubber, which eliminated the danger of unwanted collisions. The room came alive with laughter and expressions of amazement.

Pell invited everyone to the football field the next day to try out full-sized boomerangs as invented by the Australian aborigines. Not since Professor Timothy Rettich's most

recent exploding demonstration in General Chemistry did science at work generate such levity and enthusiasm.

Every great inventor, performer, or stage magician, overreaches on some occasion. This, too, was one of Minor's occasional faults. Perhaps his most regrettable moment occurred with the President's Convocation in 1997 where the speaker was Yoshiro Nakamatsu, otherwise known as Dr. NakaMats. NakaMats was the father of an IWU physics major, and Minor noted when perusing the admission file that the young Nakamatsu had a father of apparently considerable renown. After all, he claimed to have invented the floppy disk and the digital watch, among his 3,000 or more patented ideas (patents are awarded regardless of whether they work or not, and there is reason to believe that a number of Dr. Nakamats' inventions were in this category).

At the conclusion of his talk, Minor bestowed on Dr. Nakamats an honorary degree. This was right after he had ended with a flourish, touting his invention of "Love Jet, a sexual enhancement product . . . created out of concern about Japan's declining birthrate" (quotation from the Wikipedia entry on NakaMats), and perhaps his crowning achievement, a perpetual motion machine. A few years later, on Dr. NakaMats' return to campus, *The Pantagraph* reported:

> A few years ago, Illinois Wesleyan gave Japan's Yoshiro NakaMats an honorary degree because of all his inventions and because he is director of the World Genius Convention. A couple of weeks ago, NakaMats finally returned the favor; giving IWU president Minor Myers Jr. a Genius Award. All of which made us wonder: What's Minor Myers invented? As far as we can tell, nothing. But he

does like to play with model trains. And he's nuts about antiques, including old musical instruments. "My motto boils down to this," Myers says in a recent book-collecting magazine article. "Anything I can find eighteenth century—and cheap—I will buy. Anything. Anywhere. Japan. China, Europe, it doesn't matter. I want to have it." Who says Wesleyan's filled with a bunch of spoiled kids from the suburbs?

Bright pennies.

Bob Eckley always avoided giving too much acclaim to any single student, either when enrolled or in their achievements as an alum. He would say dismissively, "Everyone has a bright penny." In this respect—indeed, in almost all respects—Minor and Bob were on opposite sides of the issue. Minor loved achievers, particularly those who achieved in more than one area. But a bright penny need shine on only one side. A few examples come readily to mind, perhaps fueled by the interests of two active boys growing up.

Minor discovered that Illinois Wesleyan graduates of the School of Theatre Arts were finding parts in a number of films. He wanted the world to know this, but most particularly the world of potential students. He assembled and designed what initially he called, "the movie card" to spread the news. The movie card started out in a multi-fold edition about the size of a business card. I suppose it might have included twenty or more films. By the time my last copy (1999) was published, it had expanded to a full-scale 28 page booklet itemizing perhaps 300 films in which IWU alumni had appeared.

None were really big stars, but several had appeared in numerous and significant parts: Kevin Dunn, Frankie Faison,

Stephanie Faracy, Richard Jenkins, and James Sutorius had fifteen or twenty or more film credits each. Periodically Minor would check the Admissions Office to make sure that there was a good supply of the brochure readily available to prospective student visitors. Jim Ruoti was more in the Bob Eckley frame of mind—he detested the "Illinois Wesleyan at the Movies" piece.

Dawn Upshaw graduated from Illinois Wesleyan in 1982 with a Bachelor of Music in vocal performance. She had taken General Psychology from me in 1978 or 79; in a class of about 80 she had the highest grade on the midterm. I made a mental note to speak to her and discourage her from pursuing a useless degree in music for the much more real opportunities available to new B.A.s in psychology. Had I done so, she would have laughed at me and I would have been embarrassed.

Luckily I did not carry through with my plan. During her senior year the School of Music performed Puccini's one act opera, Gianni Schicchi. When Upshaw sang the aria, "O Mio Babbino Caro," It brought me as near to a swoon as music ever has done. At that very moment I became aware that she had made the better choice for her future.

Upshaw went on for a Master of Music degree at Manhattan School of Music, and launched into a New York-based vocal performance career. Soon she was appearing at the Metropolitan Opera, and her first recording, *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*, received the Grammy Award for Best Classical Vocal Soloist in 1989. In 1992 she recorded Henryk Gorecki's *Symphony No. 3*, which sold over a million copies, almost unheard of in the classical repertoire. In 2007, she received a MacArthur Fellowship, which she devoted

to the support and performance of works by composers of contemporary art song.

Minor was much inclined to give CDs away to friends of the university, old acquaintances of his own, and anyone who he was trying to impress with the accomplishments of Wesleyan alums. Many of these were recordings of IWU School of Music ensembles. But his favorites, by far, were Upshaw's recordings.

Upshaw has performed across the nation and around the world both in opera and in recital. In 1995, she gave the Illinois Wesleyan Commencement Address. She has performed in Bloomington, on the Westbrook Auditorium stage, and at the Krannert Center at the University of Illinois. I heard her at the Walt Disney Concert Hall in downtown Los Angeles, one of Frank Gehry's monumental designs of sweeping and twisting metal (with great acoustics, I might add). There she performed contemporary art songs with Immanuel Ax at the keyboard—the kind of music she had supported with her MacArthur award. It was a night to remember. For years, when mentioning Upshaw as an alumna of Illinois Wesleyan University, Minor would include the comment of a reviewer from rather early in her career whose identity is unknown to me, who said of her, "She is the world's greatest soprano." So much for dismissing our bright pennies.

Not everyone who caught Minor's attention came from the School of Music. Often in the annual President's Report, a publication whose primary purpose was to recognize donors of the previous year, Minor would begin with recognition of several seniors with significant records of achievement. In a 1992-93 publication titled "Perspectives," here are the bullet points on half of the twelve students who each

received a two-page spread, and a brief update on what they are doing today.

> *Jennifer Jancik:* A softball playing math-physics major goes into operations research; with a Master of Operations Research at North Carolina State, Jennifer is now Lead-Optimization Engineer at Schneider National, Inc.
>
> *Debbie Main:* A German and psychology major prepares for the ministry; Deborah is Chaplain at Saint Vincent Hospital, Indianapolis.
>
> *Jason Payne:* A mind for physics, business administration, and music; with a Ph.D. in materials science from the University of Minnesota, Jason is a Development Engineer at Eastman-Kodak.
>
> *Helena Klumpp:* Violinist, pol science major off to Georgetown Law School; Helena remained in Washington, D. C., for several years with Chadbourne & Parke LLP and is now a tax attorney with Baxter International in Deerfield.
>
> *David Priess:* Keeping an eye on the Middle East; Duke University Ph.D., David worked as a CIA analyst and briefer; he is now Director of Analytic Services for Analytic Advantage Inc. and the author of *The President's Book of Secrets* published in 2016.
>
> *Chris Bisaillon:* All-division NCAA record of 55 career touchdown passes caught; having worked for Van Kampen Merritt for 18 years, he is now managing partner of Bottleneck Management, a restaurant management company.

It is nice to think that many—most?—all?— of our students have their own unique and meaningful stories. It was Minor's

goal to find such a story for every student he met. "What's your passion?" would be his first question.

Minor was also always looking for faculty pursuing interesting avenues in their research. Let's dial the clock back a few years—65 million years to be exact. At that time, dinosaurs roamed the earth. But in a relatively short period of time they all became extinct, which allowed our little mammalian ancestors to evolve into niches that had been closed by the dominant dinosaurs. This rather sudden change is reflected in the rock layers seen on the sides of cliffs and canyon walls. There is a rather distinct line, in fact, referred to as the K-T boundary (Cretaceous-Tertiary boundary).

In 1980 Luis and Walter Alvarez, a physicist and geologist at the University of California Berkeley, proposed a new and novel theory. Based in part on sudden changes in the chemical makeup of the rocks at the K-T boundary, they proposed that an enormous meteorite had slammed into the earth 65 million years ago, causing more damage than thousands of nuclear weapons exploding all at once, with enormous and global catastrophic effects.

Wendy Wohlbach was a graduate student at the University of Chicago at the time, and became interested in this theory. She noted that, if intense heat were generated by this impact, then the heat would quite possibly produce global wildfires that would destroy habitat and cause mass extinction of many of the earth's species. If there were such global wildfires, however, there ought to be residues verifying the fires at the K-T boundary. She began studying samples of K-T boundary rocks, and discovered that indeed there was

such evidence, in the form of carbon particles characteristic of burning organic matter. Soot, for short.

Wohlbach joined the Illinois Wesleyan faculty, and of course brought her graduate school research project along with her. Soon she was talking about it to students and faculty, and before long Minor heard about it. He wanted to hear from Wohlbach just how the theory worked, just what the role of meteorites was, and so on.

Minor didn't get interested in ancient soot, but he developed a strong interest in meteorites. It turns out there is an active collectors market for meteorites. Anybody can buy them, in different types and from around the world. Soon Minor had a very fine collection of meteorites, and commandeered a display case in Sheean Library to show the campus what he had done with a display. In September 1993 Walter Alvarez was invited to campus as a Convocation speaker. Minor had scored again.

It is worth noting that, although himself a humanist through and through, Minor was not just tolerant of science, but an active supporter of all things scientific. It is true that he liked science that had a handle the lay person could grasp. Primeval soot was such a phenomenon. So were meteorites. I'm sure he was elated the first time Gabe Spalding of our Physics Department talked about fabricating "optical tweezers"—beams of light not unlike Star Trek tractor beams—to move things about, even if the objects being moved were minutia. Or Becky Roesner, like Wohlbach a chemist, discussing "Bucky balls"—spherical structures

of carbon atoms configured with the geometry of geodesic domes and thus named after Buckminster Fuller.

When related projects showed up in the student papers at the Powell Research Conference he was especially pleased. When one of Suzie Balser's biology students presented work that identified a previously unknown species of tardigrade (or "water bear" as they are informally known), discovered in a rain gutter somewhere in Bloomington, he was especially thrilled. These things had a way of appearing in his talks to prospective students, and in his regular reports to the Board of Trustees.

Chapter 5

The Pursuit of Excellence

It is entirely fair to say of Minor that he set his mission as President of Illinois Wesleyan University as the pursuit of excellence. In his interview for President, he commented on his impressions after two days of interviewing and meeting with students, faculty, and administrators. "Illinois Wesleyan is a well-kept secret," he said, reflecting on the fact that IWU was not well known on the East coast. "We must correct that."

He did many things both to publicize the University and to improve it in multiple respects. Sometimes he had the virtually unanimous support of all the members of the campus community. At other times, the support was divided. In particular, he faced the task of providing leadership to a diverse faculty that was a challenge to bring together. It was with a chuckle that we heard for the first time the wisecrack that leading a faculty was not unlike "herding cats." But there is truth to it.

Minor obtained a grant of one million dollars from the Tanaka Foundation (Tanaka Ikueikei) for the purpose of establishing a faculty position in Japanese language. At the time, Illinois Wesleyan lacked any program in Asian studies or languages. Minor was impressed with the possible opportunities that the Chrysler-Mitsubishi joint venture automobile plant—originally dubbed Diamond-Star Motors—that had recently been built in Normal Illinois, provided to Illinois Wesleyan.

I would say he pretty much single-handedly made a decision to pursue Japanese language and culture rather than Chinese based on this fact, as well as the contact he had with Tanaka that had been established in his time at Hobart and William

Smith. There wasn't much faculty consultation on this move. But, because the program was based on new money, not a reallocation from an existing position, there were few grounds on which the faculty might raise an objection.

The Chair of the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literature (MCLL) found grounds to object, however. At the time, all the languages were grouped in one administrative unit, although the Hispanic Language program was the largest, and it eventually split off and went its own way. The MCLL chair, who came from the Spanish language program, sent a five-page memorandum to the Dean and the Chair of Curriculum Council making an impassioned case against bringing any non-Western language into the MCLL.

The arguments were diverse: Japanese is harder to learn than, for example, Spanish, and would require that the students study twice as much; Ph.D.s in Japanese literature are hard to find and would require a big salary; a non-major language program could not offer literary studies, which should be the capstone in the study of all languages; a Japanese language program "could conceivably have students studying more hours abroad than here on campus." Instead of Japanese, it was recommended that all students accepted for admission to Illinois Wesleyan should have four years of high school study in a single (Western) foreign language so that teaching could be concentrated on the upper division literature courses that were what the faculty really wanted to teach anyway, or words to that effect.

I don't know if this memorandum ever got to Minor's desk. I think it would not have convinced him to send Tanaka his check back. In any event, the arguments did not persuade the Curriculum Council, which approved the introduction of the Japanese curriculum and brought it to the general faculty

for a vote of approval, which was granted. Japanese was in at Illinois Wesleyan despite the opposition of the head of our foreign languages.

Furthermore, I believe Minor was also the prime mover in obtaining a second grant, this from the Japan Foundation, supporting the addition of a second faculty position, this one in Asian history with an emphasis on Japan. The position has been filled from its inception by Tom Lutze, a tremendously effective member of the faculty, but actually a specialist in China, though he does regularly teach Japanese history as well. Here we see the pull toward China simply due to the size of the country, its economy, and the growth of China as a major player on the world stage as it has emerged over the past two decades.

Kenji Tanaka was but a boy when the Second World War broke out. As the war ended, he was prepared for the worst: historically, the plight of losers in conflicts of much smaller scale has not been a happy one. To his surprise, then, the American occupiers set to work partnering with the Japanese to rebuild the country. There was no aftermath of retribution and punishment. Tanaka benefited from the recovery effort; he established a small post-secondary educational program in Tokyo that eventually grew into Technos International College, a proprietary school of significant proportions.

Tanaka Ikuiekei Educational Trust (now named Tanaka Memorial Foundation) was established to honor the Alliance and particularly the United States in its support of Japan's recovery from the Second World War. Additionally, the foundation was established to honor Kenji Tanaka's father, Juichi Tanaka, who had established Meijo University in Nagoya, Japan. In the grant presentation ceremony held at New York's Metropolitan Club on July 25, 2003, a ceremony

that I attended, Tanaka in his opening remarks summarized his mission with the following: "From the ashes of war, Japan has grown and flourished over time, bearing the fruit of prosperity and the opportunity for all Japanese to make their mark on the world."

In addition to providing the grant for establishing a new faculty member in Japanese language, each June Illinois Wesleyan was invited to participate in the Technos College International Week. I was fortunate enough to be the faculty chaperone for the Illinois Wesleyan student delegation on two occasions, 1993 and 2009. Although the program of International Week has been somewhat modified, on my first visit we were all flown on JAL from Chicago to Tokyo's Narita Airport (faculty were even accommodated in Business Class) for a week of sight-seeing and orientation to Japanese culture.

The second week we spent primarily on the Technos campus, an ultra-modern facility in the western suburbs of Tokyo. Our students were accommodated with home stay with the families of Technos students; we experienced everything from Japanese cuisine to traditional Japanese theatre; a tea ceremony conducted by Technos students in traditional kimonos; visits to a Buddhist temple and Shinto shrine, and a weekend at a hot springs spa near Nagano owned by the Tanaka family. The extraordinary young virtuoso violinist, Midori, came to the campus and gave us a recital. We were treated with overwhelming hospitality.

Tanaka has two charming daughters, Mikiko and Kimiko. Today, Mikiko seems to be the operating officer for the Foundation. I have had dinner with her (in Japan), and breakfast (at the Chateau here in Bloomington), as well as chatting at receptions when she once came to campus for

graduation to present the Tanaka International Prize to the student selected by the faculty as the most deserving for recognition in international education.

At my visit to the Foundation grant awards in 2003 and again a few years later, the Tanakas held an afternoon reception at their apartment in the Bearsford, a magnificent old apartment building on Central Park West looking out on the Museum of Natural History. After lunch amid the Beaux Arts elegance of the "members only and their guests" Metropolitan Club and at the Bearsford taking an elevator that opened directly into the foyer of the spacious Tanaka apartment, I began to have a real sense of how the upper crust lives, Tokyo or New York.

Minor wasn't done with Japan after establishing us with the Tanaka Foundation. Through personal contacts he established study abroad exchanges with two of the finest colleges in Japan, Keio and Oberlin. These programs, as well as the Technos International Week and the International Prize, continue to this day.

Moving on from the Japanese study abroad opportunities, Minor took personal charge of setting up Junior Year Abroad opportunities at Pembroke College in Oxford, England. Illinois Wesleyan for many years has been affiliated with the Institute for European and Asian Studies (IEAS). Good as these programs are, however, they are typically satellite programs, which may offer classes in conjunction with classes offered through major colleges and universities abroad, but most typically with faculty who are hired by IEAS rather than the collegiate faculty in the local institutions. The Pembroke program, however, is a real Oxford program, in the tutorial tradition of the Oxford colleges, where our students are completely integrated with the degree-seeking students in

all respects. It is no doubt our most prestigious study abroad opportunity, for which the application procedure is rigorous. We have two to five students annually participating in the Pembroke program.

There are many "pursuit of excellence" initiatives that Minor pursued; it is difficult to sort them out and not drown in the detail. Four of note are: (1) the diverse speakers who visited campus during Minor's presidency; (2) the achievement of Phi Beta Kappa membership for the University; (3) the transformation of the campus with the new buildings and major renovations that were undertaken between 1989 and 2003; and (4) the goal of attracting multi-talented students.

The speaker program. Minor hand-selected many speakers ranging from convocations like the September President's Convocation and the February Founders Day Convocation, as well as the annual Commencement speaker. Commencement speakers were always confirmed by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees, and eventually a speaker advisory committee was formed for assisting in the other choices, but Minor continued, largely, to get his way with these major speaker engagements. Bill Cohen, Republican Senator from Maine who became President Clinton's Secretary of Defense, represented the perfect choice for Minor to bring to campus as a guest and speaker. Cohen had reached the top in his political career, but was also a published poet and novelist, an outstanding illustration of multiple talents.

Minor was particularly enamoured with Nobel Prize winners. Jean-Marie Lehn, 1987 Nobel Prize in chemistry, performed a piano recital during his visit. Oscar Arias visited IWU between two different terms as President of Costa Rica; in

1987 he won the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to quell the warfare that had taken its toll in Central America.

Another visitor was James Watson, who in collaboration with Francis Crick (and using critical data from Rosalind Franklin without her permission) identified the double helical structure of DNA, receiving the Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine in 1962. In September 2000 he came to campus, gave a couple of talks, and received an honorary degree, as did his wife, Elizabeth. Watson has a penchant for saying controversial things. In a talk in Evelyn Chapel, he made mention of his conjecture that women might be intellectually inferior to men, and people of color may be as well. These remarks were offensive to most of the faculty who attended his talk.

The list goes on and on. MacArthur Award winners were also sought after, and Stephen Jay Gould, Susan Keiffer, and Illinois Wesleyan's own Dawn Upshaw represented this honor. The novelist Kurt Vonnegut told us that he had determined that there are *six* seasons of the year, not just the four that tradition names. Between the colored leaves of autumn and the snows of winter, there is the bleak period where nature falls asleep; and between the last of winter snow and spring flowers comes another bleak but more promising time, when nature gradually awakens. Each year as the seasons pass I take special note of the seasons of "falling asleep" and "awakening."

Filmmaker Ismael Merchant was another guest. With his colleague James Ivory, Merchant had created a series of period costume dramas from literature, including *The Europeans*, *The Bostonians*, *The Ballad of the Sad Café*, *A Room with a View*, *Howard's End*, *The Remains of the Day*, and *The Golden Bowl*. A capable master of Indian cuisine with a cookbook to

his credit, Merchant prepared a meal for students in Berthoff Commons while at Wesleyan.

The Mexican diplomat and novelist Carlos Fuentes was here, as well as the poet Maya Angelou and filmmaker Spike Lee. Reinhold Weege, who had attended Illinois Wesleyan for a single semester, was invited to give the Founders Day talk in 1993. He was the comic genius behind the popular television sitcom, *Night Court*, and talked about the travails of television writing: being up all night on cigarettes and coffee until at 3 a.m. he would find himself retching in a toilet, only to have the needed closing comic touch occur to him so he could finish the script by dawn. Not much fun in writing comedy, it seems.

I've never been much for collecting autographs, but I had noticed that a certain number of people brought books the speakers had authored to the talks and receptions at the President's house. In the last few years of Minor's presidency, I decided to take advantage of the opportunity to get an autograph. I think I chose rather well, opting for the speaker invited to celebrate The Ames Library opening at the Founders Day Convocation on February 11, 2002. The invited speaker was John Updike. The program for Founders Day asserted that Updike wrote only 300 words per day, but this rather meager output had not prevented him from publishing all of 50 volumes over his career, ranging across poetry, short stories, novels, criticism, memoir, children's books, and even one play.

His second novel, *Rabbit Run*, came out in 1960 and a few years later Darrel Sewell, a student friend of mine at the University of Chicago, recommended it. I was enthralled and captured both by the story of Rabbit Angstrom as a representation for American angst as well as the amazing

stylistic devices throughout the book. "Bear claws rattled on the roof like rain" was a line that grabbed hold of me and which I remember to this day, being some sort of an inverted metaphor or simile—there must be a name for inverting such things as "the rain rattled on the roof like bear claws." Updike's version is so much better.

As the years passed, the continuing chronicle of Rabbit disappointed me in the sequels *Rabbit is Rich* and *Rabbit at Rest*. How I would have loved to get an autograph in my copy of *Rabbit Run*. But alas, it was nothing but a dog-eared paperback, hardly fitting for an ask of the distinguished author. So I brought my first edition of *The Witches of Eastwick*, hardly Updike's best piece of fiction, but perhaps canonized more than any, what with the film starring Jack Nicholson as the devil incarnate in the character Daryl Van Horne, with Cher, Susan Sarandon, and Michelle Pfeiffer as the witches who outsmart him. At the reception, I held out the book and implored, "I'd be most grateful if you'd autograph this." Without hesitation Updike graciously took the volume and turned to the title page. "What's your name?" he asked. With my answer, he wrote in a comfortable scrawl, "For Roger, Best wishes, John Updike." I don't remember anything from the talk he gave a bit later that evening, but I remember everything about getting the autograph.

What did this series of talks do for Illinois Wesleyan? I suppose the simple answer is, it made us all feel like we were part of the intellectual and cultural life of the nation, perhaps even the world. We had a stream of University guests to match those appearing anywhere, perhaps not with the volume of the luminaries passing through Harvard or Princeton, but

nothing second rate about it. We knew we were a player on the world's stage.

Phi Beta Kappa comes to IWU. One might have hoped that Illinois Wesleyan University could gain recognition for a Phi Beta Kappa chapter with a measure of aplomb. Why, after all, should it be a challenge to add one more academic honorary? The challenge, however, was greater than that. Phi Beta Kappa, the national liberal arts college honorary founded in 1776 now has a total of 283 collegiate chapters. Given 239 years to build the roster, that averages out to a little over one new chapter per year.

The application process is lengthy, requiring a substantial document on qualifications submitted to a committee of the national office, an on-site visit by a team of three from existing chapters, and a total of three years to complete the process. Prior to being given entry into this evaluative process, institutions must submit a preliminary application with twenty or more pages of required data attached. From among the preliminary applications, a handful of institutions are invited to make the full application.

Illinois Wesleyan first applied for a Phi Beta Kappa charter in PBK's bicentennial year of 1976. We applied again in 1985, 1991, 1994, and 1997. With our fifth preliminary application we were notified, in April 1998, that we were "selected for intensive study during the balance of the 1997-2000 review cycle" (letter from Douglas Foard, Phi Beta Kappa Secretary, to Janet McNew, Chair of the IWU Phi Beta Kappa Committee). With great pleasure we received notification of a charter granted to our faculty membership with Illinois Wesleyan privileged to shelter a local chapter. The 283 member chapters constitute less than 10 percent of

the colleges and universities of the United States; achieving this status is a great honor.

I have abstracted a summary table of data prepared for the four preliminary applications to Phi Beta Kappa from 1985 through 1997. Each of these applications required data from the previous five years for most fields (in a few cases, only the most recent data needed reporting). A review of these data provides a quick quantitative look at several quality indicators, over the sixteen years from 1981 through 1997.

Furthermore, by representing the PBK data set, there was a premium on absolute accuracy. Strangely, however, the two cases where years overlapped between two reports—1990-91 and 1993-4—do show some discrepancies. I'm not clear why, for example, market value of the endowment should vary between two reports when this number should be available directly from the annual audit reports of national accounting firms. I won't try to unravel this mystery, but it is worth noting.

Over the sixteen years of these reports, the average ACT score of entering students rose from 23.5 to 27.6; SAT average, which was not presented in the first report, went up over the eleven years from 1987 through 1997 from a composite (verbal + mathematics) average of 1162 to 1242. In the twelve years from 1985 through 1997 the market value of the University's endowment increased over 375 percent from $40.4 million to $152.2 million. Over this same period of time, the annual budget allocated for library book purchases increased from $50,000 to $203,663.

In 1997, the final General Report to the Committee on Qualifications summarized the progress in the quest for

excellence over the preceding five years. This section is worth quoting in full:

> The last five years at Illinois Wesleyan have been characterized by dramatic improvements in the liberal arts education we are able to offer our students. We have completed over $58 million in building projects that have included new centers for natural sciences, the liberal arts, and athletics/recreation/wellness as well as a new residence hall and renovations to bring the campus intranet and other electronic capacities into classrooms and dormitory rooms. In this same five-year period, we have added 15 new tenure lines to the College of Liberal Arts and brought average salaries over the target of the 80th percentile of AAUP Category IIB. We have hired about half of the current tenure-line faculty, making this an unusually young, vigorous faculty community. We have reduced faculty-teaching loads from seven to six courses per year and increased expectations for student/faculty research collaboration. The faculty has created a new, goals-based General Education Program and revised a mandatory January short term to become an exciting, optional May Term with greatly enhanced opportunities for intensive faculty/student collaboration of all kinds—for example, thematic special topics, research methods, study abroad, and independent study. Alongside these changes, the enrollment and quality of students has been growing steadily, indicating that our emphasis on offering a liberal arts education of the highest quality has taken hold among the college-bound public. Perhaps the clearest indication of how we have shifted focus to

> our liberal arts core came when Carnegie re-classified us as a Baccalaureate I institution in 1994. Thus, we were removed from *U.S. News'* "Regional University" category, where we had reigned as #1 in the Midwest for five years, and put onto their "National Liberal Arts Colleges" list, where we have risen from #64 three years ago to #50 in the current list. In short, we have made major strides toward meeting our strategic goal of becoming one of the leading undergraduate institutions in the nation.

That paragraph exudes the pride and self-assurance we all were feeling about the progress made in the first nine years of Minor's presidency. When we received the letter from Phi Beta Kappa announcing our acceptance into the list of campuses with PBK chapters, we heaved a collective sigh of relief as well as feeling and sentiments from "It's about time," to "This was much deserved."

New buildings galore. Periodically, Minor would open a Cabinet meeting with the statement, "OK, lets see how soon we can get out of here." This was always a dead giveaway that the meeting would drag on for at least two full hours. I don't know why it worked that way, but it did. As I take on this section concerning the development of the campus during the 1990s, I want to say, "Okay, lets see how succinct I can make this one—how soon can we get out of here." I'm in danger of committing Minor's foot in mouth, however, as building projects all have unique challenges, design

decisions, and construction complications that can lead to obsessing over the details.

FIGURE THREE. Summary Data from Four Sets of Preliminary Information Submitted with Phi Beta Kappa Applications for Membership

YEAR	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
# of entering students (liberal arts only)	504	475	506	465	467	426	396	357	394	411
SAT Average Score						1,162	1,131	1,156	1,125	1,177
ACT Average Score	23.5	23.8	24.1	24.5	24.7	25	25.8	25.8	26.1	27.1
Median Salary Assistant Professor					22,050					30,750
Associate Professor					26,825					34,000
Professor					34,125					48,000
Library— number of volumes					160,000					177,030
Budget — books in the Library	48,600	51,600	53,350	52,200	50,000	49,700	50,000	52,000	102,000	106,000
Productive endowment (book value)					26,800,000					36,489,313
(market value)					40,400,000					78,900,000

YEAR	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
# of entering students (liberal arts only)	502	486	525	456	518	456	518	512	592	550
SAT Average Score	1,107	1,134	1,148	1,152	1,161	1220	1230	1239	1235	1242
ACT Average Score	26.8	27	27.3	27.6	27.9	27.6	27.6	27.2	27.9	27.6
Median Salary Assistant Professor					36,000					37,313
Associate Professor					44,454					49,624
Professor					56,817					60,163
Library— number of volumes					214,958					279,423
Budget — books in the Library	52,000	75,489	73,034	87,258	83,270	87,258	107,192	115,918	227,971	203,663
Productive endowment (book value)	36,485,313	40,618,564	43,003,989	43,816,919	45,906,920	43,816,919	45,906,920	60,019,180	106,126,977	107,246,783
(market value)	68,622,886	78,646,868	85,378,660	90,537,397	92,028,321	90,537,397	92,028,321	105,077,639	118,113,475	152,206,165

Having shared with Frank Boyd, my worthy successor as Associate Provost, the project shepherd responsibilities on the newest campus building, State Farm Hall, a project that was on the master plan developed under Minor but had to wait ten years for completion, I assembled a booklet of 56 pages, many photographs with accompanying text, and gave copies to President Wilson as well as to the major IWU participants who saw the project through. (One copy is available in The Ames Library Special Collections). Similar tomes might have been assembled on at least several other of these building projects. But I will try to restrain myself. "Let's see how soon we can get out of here."

Because I participated to one degree or another in the design and construction process, and observed others as they moved from concept to completion, I can easily run through our major projects. My generally chronological tabulation would go like this: Buck Library renovation ($2.5M); Berthoff

Commons renovation in Memorial Student Center ($2M); Shirk Center for Athletics and Recreation ($15.6M); Center for the Natural Sciences ($26M); gut renovation of Sherff Hall and conversion to the Center for the Liberal Arts ($6M); renovation of Memorial Gym to the Hansen Student Center ($9.6M); Harriet Rust House ($7.1M); outdoor fields for the Shirk Athletic Complex, including Horenberger Baseball Field, Beadles-Morse Tennis Courts, and new facilities for soccer, softball, and track ($4.6M); The Ames Library ($25.7M). These projects total $99.1 million. A summary out of University Communications reports that, during the Myers era, Illinois Wesleyan invested $115 million on new buildings. This total would have included major renovations of almost all the residence halls, acquisition and rehabilitation of Martin Hall (former residence for student nurses at Mennonite School of Nursing), a new house for Sigma Chi, and such infrastructure projects as installation of the campus-wide fiber optic data network.

A walk around campus confirms that a major transformation occurred during Minor's administration. Bob Eckley had built a few things. After assuming the presidency, Eckley quickly built a music annex and a new art building on the south campus, utilitarian buildings that were constructed to fill some pressing space needs. Then a decade passed until Evelyn Chapel, a perfect jewel of a building, which has served the University well, opened in 1984. The Fort Natatorium, which became the first element in what later materialized as the Shirk Center, soon followed. These were important new buildings, but they were still relatively modest additions to the campus as it had become under President Lloyd Berthoff. Under Minor, the place was transformed.

At least one caveat is in order. Three of the projects identified above—the Buck Library renovation, the Shirk Center, and

the Center for Natural Sciences—had been conceived of and were all in one stage or another in planning prior to Minor arriving on campus. Thus, credit for these projects should be assigned more widely, particularly to Wendell Hess, as both the Shirk and Science Centers were originally identified by the Eckley administration as worthy projects on the long-term agenda. All the other projects were wholly conceived of and executed under the Myers administration.

Some campuses have adopted a defined style of architecture and have a distinctive character due to a historic loyalty to it. The University of Chicago comes to my mind, in part because as a student entering in fall 1960 I am so familiar with it. The heart of that campus was designed and built between 1895 and the 1920s, in a style that has come to be known as Collegiate Gothic. It echoes the campuses of Oxford University. Princeton is built in a similar style, and Yale as well. Harvard, on the other hand, is a hodgepodge of unrelated buildings, each reflecting the era in which it was designed and built, but without any attention to consistency.

But even at Chicago, Yale, and Princeton, the consistency lasted only through a period of several decades, when it succumbed to modernism, the international style, and the egos of Mies van der Rohe, Louis Kahn, Frank Gehry, and others whose work expresses a distinctive personal style. The buildings of Illinois Wesleyan express a fairly consistent architectural vocabulary, without following any rigid convention. We are a red brick campus, the buildings often enhanced with limestone banding and other embellishments. Windows often appear with Roman arches, in preference to

Gothic forms, which do appear on Buck Library and Presser Hall but not elsewhere.

When selecting an architect for a new building, it has been our preference to look for a firm that endorses what can be called "contextual architecture:" that is to say, architecture that fits the pre-existing campus context, not something boldly innovative that risks the "sticking out like a sore thumb" effect. I think we have been successful at this.

Furthermore, we have often selected one architectural firm to do two projects or sometimes three, before moving on to another firm for further projects. For example, Ben Weese designed Evelyn Chapel, and then the interior renovation of Buck Memorial Library; Jack DeBartolo was the design architect for the Center for Natural Sciences, and the renovation and conversion of Sherff Hall into the Center for the Liberal Arts. The Boston firm of Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott designed The Ames Library and the transformation of Memorial Gym into the Hansen Student Center and, under Dick Wilson, State Farm Hall.

In my opinion, all these buildings work well together. They express a consistency while not appearing to replicate each other. The campus is harmonious. Stevenson Hall stands up well next to State Farm Hall, although they were built a century apart. Holmes Hall alone, an anomalous piece of 1950s-era international style, looks like a misfit. Some architects have suggested, however, we should preserve it just because of its unique representation of its time in architectural history.

Early in his presidency, Minor discovered the work of the Bloomington architect Arthur L. Pillsbury (1869-1925).

Today, 110 homes of Pillsbury's design remain standing in Bloomington-Normal, the one at 1313 N. Fell Ave. in which I lived for nearly 30 years, and 1313 N. Clinton Blvd. in which Associate Provost Frank Boyd and his family lived for many years, being among them. In 1920, The Illinois Wesleyan Board of Trustees commissioned Pillsbury to devise a master plan for rebuilding and expanding the campus.

It is a wonder to behold: there is a central quadrangle of academic buildings approximately mapping into the current Eckley quadrangle, and what appears to be a residential quadrangle where the Memorial Center and Pfeiffer Hall are now located. A grand allée extended from the academic quadrangle to Empire Street marked by rows of Lombardy poplars to the east and west. The imagined campus is both formal and grand, superseding the physical plant of 1920 that included little more than Old Main and Old North, neither of which quite remain in the plan. It is a plan for dreamers, to be sure; the cost of building such a campus was far beyond the capacities of the University at the time.

A plan for dreamers, it captured the imagination of Minor Myers jr. Minor dreamed and fantasized about such a campus. Would it be possible to resurrect the Pillsbury Plan and bring it into existence for the twenty-first century? Of course he knew that was an impossible dream, but what are dreams for if not to imagine the impossible. One thinks of Minor as possessing a mind not unlike Lewis Carroll, who once said "Sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast." Realizing the Pillsbury Plan was certainly

one of Minor's impossible dreams, but he would bring it up whenever there was talk about campus planning.

Actually, since Pillsbury there had been another campus master plan, and Minor commissioned two more. In 1981, President Eckley was instrumental in selecting Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (SOM) to do a plan. A major issue was identification of a location for what was to become Evelyn Chapel. This architecture firm is best known for the design of Lever House (Manhattan), the Sears Tower (now Willis Tower) and John Hancock Building (both Chicago), and the Burj Khalifa (Dubai), at 2,722 feet the world's tallest building. Although such architectural achievements imparted an international reputation, the Illinois Wesleyan project stood at the modest end of their project scale.

At the time, we were fortunate to have a partner of SOM on the Board of Trustees, a contact that proved to be conclusive in the selection of SOM for our project. Ken Browning, then IWU's Business Manager, remarked that the SOM team was adamant in its opinion that the Eckley quadrangle was much too large and should be broken up with one or more buildings dividing the space. The idea was poorly received by the campus community. SOM did a better job in identifying the site on which Evelyn Chapel came to be located.

Following the design of the Center for Natural Sciences, Jack DeBartolo was hired to do a new campus master plan. We knew that a library would be the next major project for campus development, and we were stymied as to an appropriate location. As the premier academic building on the campus, it seemed that it should be located on the Eckley Quadrangle. Most places on the quadrangle were already taken, however. There was a gap to the east, but leaving that

open provided a view to Evelyn Chapel, even located as it was across Park Street. We had begun considering the possibility of tearing down Gulick Hall and positioning the library on the southwest corner of the quad. The domino effect would require building a replacement residence hall somewhere else, however, and that seemed like an extravagance we probably shouldn't take on.

DeBartolo had noted that, in addition to a new library, McPherson Hall, the home of the School of Theatre Arts, was inadequate on multiple grounds. For starters, it was too small. In addition to McPherson, the Theatre program used space in five additional campus buildings: across University Street, a house (called the "Brown House") was used for design classes; the Phoenix Theatre in a semi-basement of Memorial Center; the Melba Kirkpatrick black box theatre located in the School of Music addition of 1972; dance and scene work pursued on the second floor of the Blackstock Carriage House; a dance floor installed over the Memorial Gym swimming pool after Fort Natatorium opened in 1985; and the deserted locker rooms of Memorial Gym became storage space for props and costumes. McPherson itself was inadequate because it lacked handicap accessibility; its lobby space was tiny and the women's restroom was cramped beyond belief; the scene shop was in the wings of the main-stage, which also doubled as a classroom. All these problems cried out for relief in the form of a new and much enlarged building. McPherson had to go.

DeBartolo's proposal, then, was for the new library to be located south of University Street. Removal of McPherson would open the library to the academic quadrangle; in fact, the historically east-west axis of the quadrangle would then have a second, north-south axis. Although to make the plan

work the University would have to acquire a dozen homes in the two-block area where the library would be placed, and Prairie Street would have to be closed from University to Empire Street, we were ready to dream this impossible dream and bring it to life. Browning began an active program of property acquisitions in the required expansion zone. Within a few years, a sufficient amount of the land had been purchased to make us believe that the plan was going to work.

Master planning wasn't yet complete, however. After work on The Ames Library had been well launched, the library's architectural firm was commissioned to do yet another campus master plan, twenty years after SOM and hardly seven years after the DeBartolo plan had been presented. Here the major consideration was the fate of Sheean Library, which was slated to be closed immediately after the collection had been moved to the new library, as well as siting a new theater, identifying locations for possible new residence hall construction, a day care center, and assorted other odds and ends.

The suspicion raised by DeBartolo that renovation of Sheean Library would be as costly as removal and new construction on the vacated site was confirmed, and the Sheean location became the site for a new classroom building to replace Shaw Hall. The first building on the Illinois Wesleyan campus, Old North, which opened in 1858, had been torn down in 1966 to make way for the construction of Sheean Library. Minor saw the new classroom building as an opportunity to resurrect the memory of Old North from the past; he dubbed the projected new building New North, and he suggested

it should resemble as much as possible the architecture of Pillsbury's Campus Master Plan.

Those ideas were rattling around in all our minds when Minor's untimely death brought everything to a sudden stop. A few years later, the new classroom project moved back onto the main agenda, but the notion of fulfilling a small piece of the Pillsbury Master Plan had fallen away. And that was the end of Minor's last dream for the IWU campus.

The multitalented. Minor's personal interests and his goals for the University converged on his desire to make Illinois Wesleyan a haven for the multitalented. Not only did this become his special tool for student recruitment, he worked on a book manuscript titled *The Polymath,* which engaged his personal scholarship for many years. The book was never completed, although there are many files and partial drafts of material on the project in The Ames Library's archives and special collections.

I do have a copy of an admissions brochure that is titled "Options for the Multitalented." It begins with profiles of five "multitalented" students, ranging from a biology major who graduated in 1986 up to an English/writing intensive major who had not yet graduated, with a prospective graduation date of 2003. So the brochure was probably written in 2001 or 2002. They are an interesting and quite mixed bag: 1986 was a biology major who became interested in bioethics and took a year before medical school at Stanford to study philosophy at Kings College, University of London.

Then the narrative jumps to 2001, where a beginning pre-med student who loved jazz switched to computer science while participating in the Jazz Band and graduated with a B.S. in computer science and a B.A. in music. 2002 majored

in business with a Spanish minor; he was a juggler. As a prospective student, 2003 attended a basketball scrimmage and auditioned in music; she dropped out of varsity sports, but became a sports writer for *The Argus* while pursuing a writing-intensive major and minoring in music. 2005 was described mostly in terms of his ambitions: to major in physics and music and fit all his labs and lessons together while avoiding schedule conflicts.

The inside front page starts out by defining its subject:

> The Illinois Wesleyan University campus is an exceptionally welcoming environment for many multitalented students pursuing their intellectual fantasies. Illinois Wesleyan provides a niche for that type of student who moves easily from the chemistry lab to the piano practice room, or from the history classroom to the art studio. That intellectually passionate, broadly curious kind of student has become a trademark of Illinois Wesleyan University.
>
> At Illinois Wesleyan, students do not have to abandon one passion to pursue another. Students aren't nudged into either–or choices. Instead, they are encouraged to follow their intense curiosity wherever that takes them—even when it means pursuing diverse interests simultaneously. The philosophy that leads Illinois Wesleyan to nurture the intellects of these multitalented students is in keeping with the spirit and value of a true liberal arts education.

I imagine the text of this brochure is essentially identical to the way it was when it came off Minor's office computer; it has

his fingerprints all over it. After the profile of five students, it goes on to a section on "Multitalented Personalities," where Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Jefferson, Sir William Herschel, and Sir John Lubbock are profiled, and then to another section on "British Prime Ministers" with mentions of Sir Winston Churchill, Lord Aberdeen, Benjamin Disraeli, William Gladstone, and Arthur Balfour and touched on before—you guessed it—the crowning example of Sir Edward Heath, whose visit to Illinois Wesleyan I have already described.

The problem taking root can be captured by sketches of two actual students, both of whom attended Minor's Presidential session on "Options for the Multitalented" presented many times at Faculty Open House programs for prospective students. The first student left Minor's presentation in near tears, and visited with an admissions counselor later that day. "The President seemed to be saying, 'You have to have two or three majors to be welcome here.' I really don't have multiple talents. I just want to get a degree in accounting," she sobbed. I believe we lost her as a prospective student. The emphasis on multitalented seemed tacitly to proclaim, "Students with strong interests in a single field of study need not apply."

The other student did enroll as a first year student, and appeared in my office soon after the fall semester began. She had asked Minor in the Q&A period at the end of his talk if she could become a landscape architect at Illinois Wesleyan. Her dream was to open a landscape nursery someday. Minor had immediately improvised a response. She could develop a special contract major in Horticulture, he told her with assurance, combining a set of botany classes from the biology department with art classes that would develop her design sense. Before she got to me, she had already visited Professor Jonathan Dey, at the time our presiding Professor of Botany,

and she interpreted his response as dismissive. She could major in biology if her grades were high enough, but she had already missed the opportunity to register in General Biology and General Chemistry in her first year, the standard curriculum for biology majors, and she might not be able to graduate in four years.

Minor, in his effort to offer a creative solution to the student's inquiry, had overreached. She felt deceived, and was livid. And so much for the rough spots in Minor's claim that Illinois Wesleyan is a place where we nurture and support the multiple interests of students.

The program for Special Interdisciplinary Majors (informally, often referred to as "contract majors") makes an interesting story. I'm not sure when this opportunity came into existence, but it has been available for decades. The guidelines specify that with the support of a faculty member from a department contributing a field of concentration to the special major, a student can design a set of courses meeting a coherent academic interest not available via any standard departmental major. The option was pursued by several students each year and caused few waves. Then a faculty member who was all that remained of a one-time major department in Speech and Communications began to make special interdisciplinary majors in communications routinely available. The option was wildly popular, and at its peak had somewhere between 20 and 30 students selecting it as a major.

The result was that the Humanities Division, where the one existing faculty position in communications had been relocated from the School of Theatre Arts, moved to have all but one course in communications eliminated from the curriculum, with the consequence that the faculty tenure line in communications would be dropped and an adjunct

would be hired to teach the one remaining course. It was, of course, a considerable embarrassment to the departments of religion and philosophy to be outnumbered in terms of majors by a program offered by a single faculty member.

That didn't kill the special major, however. Bob Aaron, Director of University Communications at that time, hosted a steady stream of interns in his office who wanted to contract a communications major. These students were already receiving academic credit for their internships under one of the departments in the Division of Social Sciences where one of the department heads was quite amenable to signing off on this arrangement. The faculty again became aroused, with the Curriculum Council ultimately bringing to the entire faculty for vote a revision in the special major provisions requiring that every proposal be presented to the Curriculum Council for deliberation and final action.

No longer would there be a flexible, friendly accommodation of student interests. The integrity and prerogatives of the faculty had been challenged, and it was time for the faculty to reassert its commanding authority in all things curricular. Let's get those students back in line. As a result, the number of special majors plummeted nearly to zero for a time. The moral is, no matter how encouraging the President is for such academic accommodations to student interests, the faculty rules the curriculum and that is the bottom line. Remember that problem of herding cats.

The faculty of Illinois Wesleyan, like any aggregation of people, share certain values but have their individual beliefs as well. I'm sure that there were faculty at Wesleyan who were more than ready to do what they could to further

Minor's vision of a haven for the multitalented. But others deeply disagreed.

I recall the early days when I joined the faculty at Illinois Wesleyan. This was 1969 and the years soon after. There was a faculty lounge on the second floor of Sheean Library (in 1969 it had not yet received that name) where coffee was available every morning. The conversations there were helpful in learning the culture of Illinois Wesleyan. I remember some faculty from the School of Music—I think particularly of Hank Charles and Dick Hishman, both now deceased—as proponents of the view that the School of Music ranked supreme in the status hierarchy of the university. One would believe, in listening to them, that Illinois Wesleyan was a music conservatory with a small service program in general education attached called the college of liberal arts. They believed that the only students with talent and promise came to Wesleyan for music; everyone else was a dud.

I have heard several music faculty over the years disparage their own B.A. program in music—only the B.M. program they would say, at least an approximation to a conservatory approach, was worth anything. The B.A. was a waste of time for anyone with musical talent. Because the most obvious offering for multitalented students was 'music +' (that is, music + biology/pre-med, or music + a pre-law curriculum, etc.), and because the only way to fit together a liberal arts B.A. program with music was to pursue the B.A. in music rather than the B.M., the "music +" multitalented students have always run into difficulties in articulating their disparate interests.

When science is combined with music, there is an automatic conflict between the scheduling of ensembles in the late afternoons and science labs, many of which are also

scheduled in the afternoons. There have been many conflicts as a result, with the hapless multitalented student caught betwixt and between. But it is a badge of their perseverance and dedication to note that a large number of students have, over the years, graduated as biology-music double majors, and they have tended to be pretty happy with their experience at Illinois Wesleyan.

For example, I remember a French horn player who went to MIT for a doctorate in bio-engineering where she found a great research lab to apprentice in, and as well as that auditioned into the MIT Symphony Orchestra to keep up her horn playing. She is one of many who benefited from the double major opportunities at Illinois Wesleyan. Minor would have been proud of this multitalented young woman, our Bridget.

I describe this state of affairs with a tolerant shrug. These problems are the natural side effects of faculty who are devoted to the excellence of their own specialties, not to assuring that their students can pursue their individual and diverse passions. This is the reality of strong and distinctive academic programs: they don't always mesh easily.

Minor, however, sometimes displayed a Pollyannaish streak: He wanted to believe everything was good, everyone was happy. I remember Minor's reaction when student government had passed a resolution calling for University-supplied condom machines in all the residence hall restrooms. I was in the Provost's outer office when Minor came in to refill his coffee mug. The Provost attempted to raise an issue that had just come up regarding the condom controversy. Minor said, "No, no, no, don't tell me about it," stuck his fingers in his ears, and walked out. I believe as well, figuratively speaking, that he had his fingers in his ears

regarding the challenges in coordinating academic programs for the multitalented. He didn't want to hear of it.

Over the years, these things ebb and flow. Currently the campus atmosphere has become quite supportive of interdisciplinary work and curricular flexibility allowing students opportunities to set individual goals. Minor's instincts were good, but he was sometimes overoptimistic about the ease with which such goals can be achieved. Perhaps today it is all in better balance at Illinois Wesleyan University than it was for a time a few decades back.

A cautionary tale concerning the temptation to assume that every change is an easy one. In a faculty meeting sometime around 1995, a member of the faculty rose to request that the University provide an on-campus daycare to meet the childcare needs of faculty and staff alike. The faculty member in question was dissatisfied with the options available in the community: The best daycares were too far from campus, they were inconvenient for parents to stop in and check on their children during working hours and, after all, wasn't it a responsibility of the University to provide fringe benefits that would increase the satisfaction of all the staff regardless of their rank or responsibilities. The faculty member who raised the issue made an impassioned case that clearly hit a resonant note with the faculty in attendance at the meeting.

After hearing out the complaint, without even the slightest pause Minor proclaimed, "Done!" and that was that, or so it seemed: a new daycare was on its way. There are moments when we all would like to resolve an issue with a declaration of "Done!" but hindsight often shows that such gestures can be premature.

The daycare proposal was assigned to a faculty-staff committee, who soon found that old houses like the few

that Illinois Wesleyan owned in the neighborhood would all fail to meet the State of Illinois requirements for licensed daycare facilities. A property along Sugar Creek that had been a dentist's office prior to its purchase by the University would fail because of the proximity to the creek, flood plain stipulations, a ban on use of the basement, and other limitations (it was eventually converted to the Print, Publications and Mail facility). New construction would be necessary, which would require the acquisition of a suitable piece of land, and then a fund raising effort to get the money for a new building.

All told, the daycare was estimated to be a million dollar project. Eventually, after much delay, BroMenn Hospital convened representatives of ISU and IWU to investigate the feasibility of a joint daycare to be built on the edge of the BroMenn campus. The desired daycare facility did come about, though not for more than ten years after Minor's hasty "Done!" had been pronounced at the faculty meeting.

To use an old idiom, Minor had something of a tendency to shoot first and ask questions later. Sometimes that strategy worked out and sometimes not, or at least not as smoothly as Minor might have liked. Neither a special major in horticulture nor a campus art museum became realities, but a new library and a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa did. On balance, regardless of rough spots in the road, it proved to be a successful period in the history of Illinois Wesleyan.

Chapter 6

Go Forth and Do Good

If Minor ever finds his way into a book of famous quotations, there are two that will top his list. The first is "Follow your passion." Don't plod along what people think is the right career path to become an accountant or a banker or a hedge fund manager. Don't study what someone else says you need in order to be a success in life. Follow your passion! If you pursue what you are passionate about, everything else will take care of itself. The other notable quotation Minor used to close Commencement each spring, to send our newly minted graduates out into the world. It was this: "Now, go forth and do well. But more importantly, go forth and do good."

Minor was a man of his word. He had followed his passion—or, better put, his *passions*—throughout his life, and it had brought him both success and happiness. But as well, he had committed himself to doing good. One might say, for instance, that he did good by Illinois Wesleyan. But it went beyond that. I want to take special note of his interest in making opportunities available for African-Americans—as students at Illinois Wesleyan University to be sure, but also for members of the local, state, and national African American community.

Illinois Wesleyan has an interesting history regarding African-American students. In the wave of racial reforms following the Civil War, African-American students were declared eligible for admission to the University in 1867. Back in the day when Wesleyan offered a variety of graduate degree programs, Gus Hill received a law degree in 1880, and Alfred O. Coffin received a Ph.D. from the University in 1889. Coffin was the first black person to receive a Ph.D. in biology

anywhere in the United States, and only the second in any field of science.

Edelbert Rodgers, class of 1932, was the oldest living minority alumnus when he received an honorary degree at the Founders Day convocation in 2001. In the 1960s, Martin Luther King spoke on campus on two separate occasions. Other leaders in the civil rights movement including Ralph Abernathy and Jesse Jackson also spoke on campus.

A report titled *The Multi-Cultural Dimensions of Illinois Wesleyan University* (January 1995) included a multi-cultural program overview. A campus-wide Minority Advisory Committee was established in 1988. The Minority Alumni Network came into being in 1992. Other new programs included Cabrini Connections (1992), the King Gospel Festival (1994), and the Wade McCree scholarship program (1991), among several initiatives.

Cabrini Connections. Cabrini-Green was a public housing project built in Chicago between 1942 and 1962 providing 3,602 living units. At its peak, 15,000 people lived there. It is gone now, the last building torn down in 2011. It was built in a more optimistic time, when the dreams for urban planning envisioned by Le Corbusier, the famed French architect who proposed that the urban residential architecture of the future should provide massive high-rise buildings in park-like settings, inspired a generation or more of public housing projects. Though the designs seemed idyllic, when built to house the impoverished minorities who were in need of homes in cities like Chicago, they turned more hellish than enchanting.

One note of optimism was sounded by IWU alumnus Daniel Bassill '68. After graduating, Bassill had gone to work in Chicago as an advertising copywriter for Montgomery Ward. After a few years, he became involved in the Cabrini-Green

Tutoring Program, which had been created by Ward's employees in the mid-1960s. Bassill became so involved and committed to this program that he moved from volunteer to its full-time executive director. In 1992 he founded Cabrini-Connections.

According to the *Multi-Cultural Dimensions of Illinois Wesleyan University* report of January 1995, activities were already underway led by at least three faculty members—Pam Lowry and Mike Seeborg of the Economics Department and Jim Sikora in Sociology—to engage in research projects of value to Cabrini Connections and to bring Illinois Wesleyan students to Chicago on day trips studying race, gender, poverty, and other issues. The 1995 report was full of optimism. By 2003, however, reading between the lines in the *Final Report of the Multicultural Study Group* (July 2003), the IWU multicultural focus had shifted from outreach to issues of student recruitment, campus climate, and alumni relations.

Wade McCree program. Illinois Wesleyan also reached out to the Detroit public school system via the Wade H. McCree, Jr Incentive Scholarship Program. We became a participant in 1994. In a manner somewhat like the Daniel Bassill alumni connection to the Cabrini Connections program, Bob Berg '65, an alumnus who was press secretary for the Detroit Mayor's Office, brought the Wade McCree program to the University's attention. Rebie Kingston, Director of the Office of Guidance in the Detroit public schools, was responsible for managing the McCree program, which begins with the selection of promising students within the Detroit schools. The students, who are selected through competitive

applications, pursue a high school college prep program, and achieve at a high level.

With successful completion of the program, they are eligible for admission to eleven public universities within the state of Michigan, and a small number of private colleges. Illinois Wesleyan was the first out-of-state college to join as a Wade McCree sponsoring campus. IWU has annually accepted three students in this program since 1994. They receive a full tuition grant for four years from the college they choose to attend.

Honorary degrees. Minor was perhaps more inclusive than presidents before or since in awarding honorary degrees. African-American candidates were not overlooked. Rebie Kingston was so honored, along with Silas Purnell, at the Founders Day Convocation in February 1996. Purnell was Executive Director of Educational Services, Ada S. McKinley Community Services in Chicago. He had been a longtime friend of Illinois Wesleyan. In the words of the Convocation program, "Operating out of a basement office in Chicago's Dearborn Homes housing project, Silas Purnell has helped more than 40,000 African-American men and women to enroll in about 200 colleges and universities nationwide." Over the years, a goodly number of these assisted students came to attend Illinois Wesleyan University. Edelbert Rogers, mentioned earlier, received an honorary degree in 2001.

Building an inclusive membership on the Board of Trustees. One additional benefit has been reaped from participation in the Wade McCree program. In 1994, Rebie Kingston was invited onto the IWU Board of Trustees. Following her joining the board, the number of minority group trustees has gradually

increased until it now stands at seven of thirty-nine, most of whom are IWU alumni.

Under Minor's guidance, the University actively supported the local minority community in additional ways. Soon after Minor became President, the Reverend James Sims and wife Corine of Bloomington were seeking a venue for an annual Gospel Festival in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King. The idea was to bring church choirs both local and from other congregations across the state for a late afternoon and evening festival of gospel music. Both Carl Teichman of the President's Office and Yvonne Jones, the Director of Multicultural Programs, met for many hours with the Sims's to launch the gospel program.

1991 marked the initial year of the Martin Luther King Gospel Festival, held in Westbrook Auditorium of Presser Hall on the Illinois Wesleyan University campus, where it has now been held for 26 years. The festival is coordinated with the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Fellowship Dinner, also co-sponsored by Illinois Wesleyan University and the United Community Gospel Singers of Bloomington-Normal. Three of King's children, Yolanda, Martin III, and Rev. Bernice King, as well as a nephew, Vernon King, have been speakers at the dinner event.[8]

Another annual event, whose impetus came from Barbara Sims-Malone of the Neighbor-to-Neighbor Educational Activity Club, is the Minority Academic Achievement Recognition Ceremony, which like the Gospel Festival, began in 1991 and also continues to this day. Sponsorship of this event is a collaboration between IWU and the Neighbor-to-Neighbor Club, with financial support from State Farm Insurance Company. The program recognizes Bloomington-Normal's minority youth in the fifth through twelfth grades who have displayed outstanding academic achievement.

Over the years, attendance at the event has risen to over 1,000 as some 300 students in grades five through twelve from two dozen area schools receive awards, according to a January 2009 article in The Pantagraph.

Director of Minority Services. In Minor's first year as President of Illinois Wesleyan, a full-time position of Director of Minority Services was created. Yvonne Jones was the first to fill the position. Young, vivacious, and energetic, Jones was a perfect fit for the position. She chose to locate her office in the Multicultural Center, in a small frame house across Park Street from Holmes Hall. The Center served primarily as a study and hangout space for African-American students, putting her at the main campus crossroads for the students she was dedicated to serving.

Within two years, however, she had chosen to move upward in University responsibilities, as she transferred to a position in the Advancement Office. In a few more years, she had negotiated an arrangement where she could live in Chicago and there serve as area representative while making only occasional visits to campus. Despite Minor's determined efforts to keep her on the payroll, she eventually left Illinois Wesleyan completely.

Replacing Jones in 1991, then, Joy Carew was hired as the second Director of Minority Services. At this time, Provost Ellen Hurwitz insisted that the position become a direct report to her rather than more sensibly remaining within Student Affairs. Hurwitz's self-assured administrative style interfered with her ability to consult broadly with constituencies who might provide useful input. Perhaps that was part of the problem, as Hurwitz ran the search for the position herself and essentially hand-picked Carew from a diverse field of candidates. Carew's many strengths may have obscured some limitations that she would bring to the

position. After she arrived we discovered that among both colleagues and students, Carew was more aloof than warm, more cerebral than socially engaged.

In fact, Carew was a brilliant woman, a graduate of the Putney School with her undergraduate studies ranging from Shimer College to Cornell University, then two masters degrees in linguistics and comparative literature, and a Ph.D. in sociolinguistics from the Illinois Institute of Technology. When accepting the position she made clear that her office required relocation out of the Multicultural Center and into Holmes Hall, the seat of all central administrative offices.

On moving in, her affinity for the Wesleyan administrative style seemed a bit out of touch when she installed a large poster of Che Guevara over her new office desk. If the poster was meant to establish something essential about Carew's personal identity, it failed to garner the respect of her Holmes Hall colleagues. Rather, it emphasized her otherness. Carew was married to an elderly Caribbean intellectual, Jan Carew, a novelist, playwright, and poet originally from Guyana.

An example of the mismatch between her talents and our needs came when Carew (with an assist from husband Jan) scheduled a visiting scholar to give a talk on Le Chevalier de Saint-Georges, an eighteenth century French-Haitian whose mother was a slave and father a wealthy French aristocrat. Le Chevalier became a distinguished composer and musician as well as a talented fencer (N.B. multitalented).

Minor was so excited over the scheduled talk that, in order to provide sufficient seating, he insisted the talk be scheduled in the Memorial Center's Main Lounge. Four hundred chairs were set up to accommodate the anticipated throng. This provision turned out to be 394 chairs too many, however,

as in addition to the Carews and Minor, just three others attended, none of whom were African-American students.

It is hard to draw any conclusion from this misstep other than that Carew didn't have a clear grasp of the Illinois Wesleyan student culture and specifically our African-American student culture. A talk by Maya Angelou, yes; a talk on an eighteenth century Haitian polymath, no[9]. After a few years, Carew left to find a better fit. Today, she is Associate Professor in the Pan-African Studies program at the University of Louisville.

Following Carew's resignation, the Minority Services position was shifted from Academic Affairs to a more appropriate administrative home in Student Affairs; the name of the position was shifted to the more inclusive designation of Multicultural Student Affairs. For the better part of a decade, the Multicultural office fulfilled its purpose but lacked the liveliness and style that Jones had initially brought to the position. She was a hard act to follow. The results improved following the prolonged transition, and after the appointment of Karla Carney-Hall as Vice President for Student Affairs a second full-time position was added in Multicultural Affairs.

Chapter 7

The University's Mission and the Oakbrook Retreat

In February 2001 the IWU Board of Trustees met in a retreat at the Oakbrook Hills Resort and Conference Center outside of Chicago. It was an exceptional event: although another trustee retreat was held a few years later, in 2007, the Oakbrook Retreat was unprecedented in the history of the University, and thus of special note.[10] The design of the retreat had been carefully worked out by Minor and Board President Craig Hart. It began with an address by David Breneman, perhaps academia's leading scholar and analyst of the growing crisis in financial aid in higher education. Breneman, Dean of the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia, former president of Kalamazoo College, and former Professor of Economics at Amherst College, and author of *Liberal Arts Colleges: Thriving, Surviving, or Endangered*, turned out to be a prescient and timely choice for keynoter.

In fact, Breneman talked little about the tuition discounting practices that had occupied so much of his scholarly work. Rather, he applied his broad knowledge of the American liberal arts college landscape to comment on the challenges and opportunities that he saw facing Illinois Wesleyan. When Minor came to Illinois Wesleyan, we were located in the *U. S. News* college rankings not among the national liberal arts colleges but with regional comprehensive colleges and universities.

We were ranking quite well: number one, in fact, for the Midwest. But it was number one amid a relatively nondescript set of campuses that laid no claim to strong identity or appeal to higher education cognoscenti. It was, as Breneman said, a "no-man's land." Thus, it seemed a worthy goal to get us off

the regional comprehensive list and onto the national liberal arts colleges list, a goal that had been accomplished in the 1994 Carnegie Foundation classification of 3,600 colleges and universities.

The downside of the move was, our ranking dropped from first on the Midwest comprehensive list to the second tier on the national liberal arts list—from first place on the old list to the unranked second tier on the liberal arts list, below the ranked top 40. We were lost in the crowd. What to do about it? I remember well a member of the Board of Trustees proclaiming, in the plenary session of the Board (and this was in the midst of the capital campaign that was launched in 1992), "We need to get in the top ten! We can do it! We should not be satisfied with anything less!" It is better to think of this proclamation as a pep talk than a realistic policy recommendation, like the football coach after a losing season and a poor recruiting year trying to fire up the team for the next season. It wasn't an achievable pledge.

In one of my fits of cynicism, I shared my reaction quite broadly around Holmes Hall. "Illinois Wesleyan has no problems that an extra half billion dollars in the endowment won't fix," I said, rather incautiously, but accurately. We weren't likely to achieve top ten status anytime soon. Getting there wasn't like getting the football team going for a better season. It would require a transformative change in the resources available for operating Illinois Wesleyan University.

Breneman, although sympathetic with our desire to improve our institutional recognition, cautioned us that in fact there wasn't any *room* at the top.[11] As if we hadn't noticed, the top ten spots were already taken by—yes, you guessed it—the top ten: Swarthmore, Amherst, Williams, Pomona, Bryn Mawr, Wellesley, Smith, Wesleyan (the one in Connecticut),

Oberlin, and Grinnell, according to the list that I just retrieved from an old issue of *U. S. News*. You can't just get yourself appended to the list. Somebody has to move out of your way to open up your aspirational space.

The ratings chase is a "zero-sum game." Don't bang your head on the wall pursuing rankings, Breneman cautioned. Honestly appraise who you are, what your distinctive characteristics might be, and work at refining and perfecting your own unique mission. Become the best that you can be at what you already are. Don't try to transform yourself into something you are not.

Something Illinois Wesleyan is not is a "pure liberal arts college." Several of the top ten colleges are "pure," which is to say, they offer only B.A. programs in the traditional liberal arts fields: humanities, and social and natural sciences. To become more like them, Illinois Wesleyan would have to eliminate its programs in business, elementary education, nursing, and the fine arts programs in music, theatre, and studio art. Little of Wesleyan's unique character would remain, and all in pursuit of an elusive prestige.

But there are many on the liberal arts list who already are not "pure." My youngest daughter graduated from Smith College in western Massachusetts, one of the "seven sisters" women's colleges of the East. When she matriculated I was surprised to discover that, far from being among the "pure," Smith was in the midst of developing a school of engineering. Smith offers many master's degree programs, in education including deaf education, as well as arts, sciences, exercise and sport studies, and a notable Ph.D. program in social work. Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania, offers degree tracks in four engineering fields. Oberlin College is well known for

its associated music conservatory program. This list of the "unpure" could be expanded greatly.

Illinois Wesleyan is far from alone in deviating from the pure liberal arts ideal. Why, Breneman asked, "would an institution that has done as well as Illinois Wesleyan" want to "lop off" its many distinctive features in pursuit of the purist liberal arts ideal? Breneman's recommendation was that "the University develop a deeper, core sense of who we are, that we become more inner-directed."

I'm not sure what Minor made of Breneman's keynote. Perhaps he had anticipated something more along the lines of an up-to-the-minute assessment of tuition discounting. From one perspective, Minor himself was the target of Breneman's forceful prescription for IWU. Minor, being the "numbers man" he was, had been captivated by the rankings game. He, more than any of us, was committed to seeing IWU move up the rankings. He often cited the unnamed trustee who had advocated a top-ten ranking for the University. Breneman appeared to have broken that bubble.

During the retreat, however, Minor expressed not a word of reservation regarding Breneman's perspective. It was obvious that the keynote address was enthusiastically endorsed by the Trustees. I don't know if Minor was convinced or not, but if not, he certainly buttoned his lip on the subject. The retreat went on from there, breaking out into four discussion groups each consisting of Trustees along with representative campus administrators and faculty. The retreat concluded with a plenary session in which each discussion group presented its results to the group at large.

Janet McNew began her summary of the University culture section of her Retreat Report with the following remark: "Illinois Wesleyan's distinctive structure, with our liberal arts core complemented by fine arts/professional programs, is not

a flaw in an otherwise pure liberal arts college but is rather the very fabric of the institution. From its beginnings, Illinois Wesleyan has offered an undergraduate education that both cherishes learning for its own sake and helps students along the path to productive careers. Our culture encourages students to develop multiple talents as they ponder their life's work during the crucially formative undergraduate years . . . the unanimous sentiment of the group encouraged us to celebrate and deepen our distinctiveness as we foster improvements that will bring greater national recognition." The sentiment of the Trustees was encapsulated by Trustee Garry Kinder, who said, "Develop your own character, and your reputation will take care of itself."

The retreat was clearly a success. Craig Hart and Minor had planned and delivered an event that both emphasized the critical role of the Board in affirming the mission of the University as well as establishing strategic goals and galvanizing the sense of commitment and motivation in serving in their collective trusteeship. In the background, however, three problems were gradually emerging that would soon draw much of the University's attention. These problems had rather unspectacular names: the financial aid discount rate, the endowment spending rate, and the unfunded liability accruing from the employee retirement health plan.

Due to Minor's untimely death, the second and third of these problems would face the new President, Dick Wilson, at the beginning of his presidency. These were not Dick's problems: he played no role in creating them, and much to his credit, he resolved both of these problems within a few years. They were not insurmountable. The ceaseless growth in financial

aid costs, however, had become a national dilemma affecting virtually all of higher education.

For most institutions, not only does the cost of financial aid increase relentlessly, but it also increases more rapidly than the annual growth of the entire operating budget. Thus, as a greater share of resources is diverted to financial aid, such growth limits the opportunity to fund other programs. Following two years in the early '90s during which financial aid increased at a rate over double the increase in the University's total budget, Minor took steps to bring financial aid under better control. We were able to develop policies that controlled this problem, and we were more effective at it than much of our competition, but the underlying problem was deferred rather than solved. Nothing was said about it at the Retreat, however, despite the presence of David Breneman who was perhaps the country's greatest expert on the national dilemma of financial aid pressures. At the retreat, we had what some believed to be more pressing issues.

Chapter 8

Minor's Personal Library

It was Cicero who said, "If a man has a library and a garden, he has all he needs for a happy life." Of course, he was wrong about the garden.

One might imagine that Minor's personal book collection had been building for decades, from its barest beginnings perhaps even when Minor was a schoolboy.[12] We don't really know what the date of origin was, and in the beginning no doubt it accreted gradually and haphazardly until emerging as Minor's most all-consuming passion, no longer gradual but with great intensity though, one might note, still with a somewhat haphazard quality about it.

Minor appears often to have been an adventitious collector, buying whatever he ran across that piqued his interest. He was always on the lookout for items to enhance certain themes in his collecting, but ready as well to add discoveries that struck his fancy. There were certain thematic areas to his collecting—eighteenth century materials of any sort and cookbooks of any era being key examples—but he didn't restrain himself when other opportunities arose.

The collection grew and grew. I am reasonably sure that Minor had only an approximate idea of how many books he owned. IWU Archivist Meg Miner has found a note that he possessed about 3,000 volumes when he moved to Bloomington. That would mean he added 10,000 more.[13] His vision for Illinois Wesleyan's new library was a repository that would be capable of containing 400,000 volumes.

One thinks he didn't imagine anything so dramatic as that within the confines of the basement of his home at 1201

Park Street, plus of course two walls of shelves in the first floor living room and I don't know how much in his study. After he had died, the number of ten thousand was bandied about. Perhaps this was suggested by Ellen Myers, or perhaps Sue Stroyan gave that estimate, or perhaps Minor himself had shared that number with others at various times.

When our own count was complete, we found something over 13,000 volumes. This seems an incredible number of books for any single person to collect. I am reputed by some visitors to my home to have lots of books, but I doubt if my collection reaches 1,000, probably less than a tenth of Minor's collection.

On the other hand, one can find records of many personal libraries far outrunning Minor's collection. Alberto Manguel, who has written extensively on libraries both great and small, numbers his personal collection at 30,000 volumes. Carter Burden, who died unexpectedly in 1996 at age 54, had a collection of 65,000 volumes. Minor was acquainted with Louis Szathmary, a Chicago chef, who died in 1996. Before his death Szathmary had accumulated a staggering collection of culinary materials numbering perhaps 300,000 items. A 200,000 chunk of "culinary artifacts" was gifted to Johnson & Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island. There are and have been many large personal collections. If one has the urge and the funds, then collections such as that acquired by J. Pierpont Morgan or Henry E. Huntington, each numbering perhaps in the hundreds of thousands of items, can lead to the establishment of what amounts to a bibliographical museum—I have visited both of these libraries and more.

Minor shared his vision for a new Illinois Wesleyan Library with many people, over many years. He talked about it with

the faculty, with the librarians, and with the Board of Trustees. He talked about it with the staff of the Office of University Advancement, and with donors, both unsuccessfully and successfully. But he said much less about his own collecting—at least he said much less to me, and for a time I held some misconceptions about it. I assume he was similarly indefinite with many others as well.

He was interviewed by the noted bibliographic author, Nicholas Basbanes, who included two segments in *Patience and Fortitude* (2001), where on pages 175-179 Basbanes summarizes Minor's views on his own collecting, and on pages 472-474 he talks about his vision for the new University library, which was not yet open at the time they talked. For anyone who wants to encounter Minor's own words on the matter of libraries, both personal and academic, Basbanes is the place to start. Basbanes has written extensively on books and collecting in its various guises. His earlier volume, *A Gentle Madness* (1995), is as essential as *Patience and Fortitude* for the serious bibliophile, and I heartily recommend them both.

Minor defined his goal in devising his personal library, "Anything eighteenth century, and cheap, I have to have." The "cheap" part, it should be emphasized, defies the first principle of collecting—the serious collecting of *anything*, no exceptions. And that is, always sacrifice quantity for quality; always seek after the best you can afford, no matter what it is that you collect. Regarding this first principle of collecting, Minor was an unabashed contrarian. Quantity over quality, the more the merrier.

The "eighteenth century" part of his collecting is easier to understand, although it also presents something of a puzzle. An art collector might focus her collecting on the Impressionist

period—roughly, 1860 (or even sometimes precisely dated to the Salon des Refuses in 1863) until it had exhausted itself around 1900. Here, art and the movements within the artistic community define epochs, not arbitrary divisions of the calendar. One would rarely find an art collector who would define her interest as "anything nineteenth century."

Basbanes (*A Gentle Madness*, ch. 1) briefly discusses the object of several collections, none of which were devoted to a century, or a time period (possibly save the collecting of incunabula, the term used to identify books printed prior to 1501). For example, Willmarth Sheldon Lewis collected materials on Horace Walpole (1717-1797), who carried on a notable correspondence throughout his lifetime. Lewis collected some 2,500 of these letters, and published several books concerning Walpole. Amy Lowell, the distinguished Boston poet and Pulitzer Prize winner, collected holographic and unpublished materials written by Keats, a collection that now is located in Harvard's Houghton Library. Mary Hyde Eccles spent a lifetime collecting the papers of Samuel Johnson and his circle.

Ralph Ellis jr collected 65,000 items of ornithology before his premature death at age 37; most of it is now at the University of Kansas. Lessing Rosenwald (coincidentally, the uncle of Pete Ascoli, my freshman college roommate) eventually gave his collection of early printing and illustration to the Library of Congress, which in 1991 celebrated the 100th anniversary of Rosenwald's birth with a major exhibit of his contributions to the library. And the list goes on and on. But I have yet to find a collector other than Minor who picked out a century to collect. At the least, it must be noted as idiosyncratic.

Still, the eighteenth century has something to say for itself. Perhaps there would be a safety net if not a life preserver

thrown to Minor's peculiar passion by noting that the period identified as "the Enlightenment" is significantly tied to the eighteenth century—sometimes it is called the "long" eighteenth century," extended to cover 1685-1815. The Enlightenment was characterized by the maturation of confidence in the power of human reason, as seen for example in the birth of modern science. John Locke was its principal philosopher, at least in the English speaking world, and one of Minor's most cherished books was Locke's *Two Treatises*, a copy from the collection of Roger Sherman, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, whose autograph it contains.

Nonetheless, a few bits of evidence would suggest that Enlightenment thought was not the subject of a particularly deep interest. I recall one occasion on which, prior to the beginning of a Cabinet meeting, Minor announced that he had just been reading something on the Marquis de Condorcet. He expressed an uninhibited enthusiasm for Condorcet's proposition that the expansion of human knowledge was leading inexorably to progress in all its forms (in particular see Condorcet's *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Spirit*, 1795).[14] Someone at the table suggested that Condorcet's argument had eroded considerably with the passage of time.

"The grand narrative of progress" has been subject to the demythologizing influences of the postmodernists. Indeed, French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard succinctly defines postmodernism as "incredulity toward metanarratives," and the grand narrative of progress must stand first among the great metanarratives of modernity. Minor admitted that he was not particularly informed on these late twentieth century developments, and we didn't hear any more from him on Condorcet. Perhaps this is thin gravy to nourish my doubts that "eighteenth century" was for Minor a shorthand

for "the Enlightenment." It really seemed to be just a matter of anything from 1701 to 1800.[15]

Minor's brother Tom Myers, in his memoir "Minor's Early Years," gives us the key to understanding Minor's passion. Sometime in Minor's youth, the Myers family took a driving trip to Colonial Williamsburg—Minor and Tom talked about this trip when Minor's health was in serious decline. Tom recounts the impact of the Williamsburg visit on Minor as follows: "Minor said that he liked the furniture and living style there so much that he decided that was how he wanted to live. He succeeded."

Actually, Sarah VanSickle, an *Argus* staff writer, had explored this territory with Minor in 1997. In an interview that appeared in *The Argus* in February of that year, she reported that ". . . Myers' focus has been on items created around the world during the eighteenth century. He was drawn to this era *as a child* when he visited Williamsburg, Philadelphia, and Boston with his parents. 'I remember being intrigued with those places and the eighteenth century ambiance. I liked the furniture. I liked the look—it was all very interesting and fascinating, so I began to focus on that particular era.'"[16]

I have added emphasis on "as a child." That is not to say his interest was "childish." Actually, it was far from it. Children tend not to become fixated on eighteenth century ambiance. I have a grandson who was fixated first on yellow taxi cabs, then on car washes, not eighteenth century furniture. In a longish discussion of Vladimir Nabokov for his "Multi-talented" project, Minor emphasized that Nabokov was a lepidopterist (self-taught) before he was a writer. When nine years of age, Nabokov became obsessed with the idea of discovering a new species of butterfly. That year he sent what he believed to be such a species to a famous lepidopterist,

only to be disappointed in learning that the species had already been identified. When he took a teaching position at Wellesley College, he also obtained a position as Fellow of the Harvard Museum of Natural History, where for seven years he curated the butterfly collection. By the time he died, he had discovered six new species of butterfly, and other lepidopterists had named five additional new species after him. That is a life we must find remarkable. Nabokov's early interest in butterflies was not childish; it was precocious. That, too, we would need to say about Minor's fixation on the eighteenth century.

But the deeper question is, why collect such stuff? Why collect anything at all? There are libraries aplenty, both public and academic, where far more ample archives and collections are possible than what anyone—particularly one of relatively modest means—can collect in a lifetime. So lets consider some of the possible motivations for a substantial personal collection of books.

Salvaging the past. Yes, Minor collected from an idiosyncratically defined subject (the eighteenth century), and pursued an inversion of the general advice to all collectors to pursue quality over quantity. But like-minded others have also been possessed of such an undisciplined book collecting urge. In a word, Minor was a "salvager." For some, the goal of collecting is to "salvage civilization" (Basbanes, p. 23). Minor pursued, as another collector, Michael Sadleir, once put it, books that were "un-sought-for and therefore cheaply priced" (p. 24).

For Minor, it seemed to be a mission, this saving of everything he could find from the eighteenth century. It's not clear how this would save the world, but there must have been more than a pinch of that to season the collecting madness.

Meg Miner cites one member of his immediate family who quotes Minor himself as referring to his collecting strategy as that of a "bottom feeder."[17] I can't resist presenting another expression of this idea of searching through the neglected materials of bygone ages for hidden treasures from the nineteenth century Scottish historian, John Hill Burton:

> It is, you will observe, the general ambition of the class to find value where there seems to be none, and this develops a certain skill and subtlety, enabling the operator, in the midst of a heap of rubbish, to put his finger on those things which have in them the latent capacity to become valuable and curious . . . in such manner is it that books are saved from annihilation, and that their preservers become feeders of the great collections in which, after their value is established, they find refuge; and herein it is that the class to whom our attention is at present devoted perform an inestimable service to literature.[18]

Minor's salvager's spirit is clearly in evidence regarding an early American copybook of harpsichord music that he purchased, apparently in 1985 or soon after. The leather-bound volume came into the antiquarian book trade as a scrapbook of nineteenth century news clippings and whatnot assembled by Benjamin Marston Watson of Plymouth, Massachusetts. It was soon discovered that Watson had repurposed the volume for his scrapbook, as underneath the glued-in clippings was a manuscript of harpsichord music. The music had been written out by Peter Pelham in late 1744 for an unidentified girl he was instructing on the keyboard. Pelham is a minor figure in early American music, known

mostly as organist of Bruton Parish Church in Williamsburg, Virginia.

Nonetheless, in the nineteen compositions he had copied out for his young student, Minor came to the opinion that several were the earliest known examples of secular music composed in colonial America. He had the idea to publish the music, with his own introduction; he listed this work, titled "An Evening with Peter Pelham: An American Harpsichord Manuscript of 1744," on his curriculum vitae as among his "books forthcoming and in progress." He wrote a 14-page introduction, unfinished as several dates and other details were left blank or with question marks where further research was needed. Apparently he never brought it to the point of seeking a publisher. Yet his purpose in salvaging lost treasures from the past was clearly in evidence.

Basbanes begins *A Gentle Madness* with an exploration of bibliophilia, or bibliomania with which it merges: "With thought, patience, and discrimination, book passion becomes the signature of a person's character. When out of control and indulged to excess, it lets loose a fury of bizarre behavior. 'The bibliophile is the master of his books, the bibliomaniac their slave,' the German bibliographer Hanns Bohatta steadfastly maintained . . ." (p. 9.)

Some collectors, collectors of all things, are controlled by an obsession for possession, in Minor's words the "I have to have it" feeling. There is no clear rationale for such a feeling, this raw, unfettered passion. Perhaps Robert H Taylor did as well as any in characterizing the mind of the collector in his remark that "it must be clearly understood that, generally speaking, the collector is sentimental, illogical, selfish, romantic, extravagant, capricious" (Basbanes, p. 23-4). Along the same lines, Wilmarth Lewis once said "Collectors

appear to non-collectors as selfish, rapacious, and half-mad, which is what collectors frequently are" (Basbanes, p. 23).

Toward the undisciplined end of it there is the hoarder—the Collyer brothers being a key exemplar. These two men, who lived their lives largely in isolation, filled their ample Fifth Avenue townhouse with what was estimated as 140 tons of accumulation: 25,000 books, bundled newspapers, musical instruments including 14 pianos, outdated medical instruments, and even a model T Ford. At such an extreme, the passion would seem to be pathological.

Basbanes provides a description of the home of the book collector Thomas Jefferson Fitzpatrick as seen after his death. "The house was full of books, packed with books, all thirteen rooms . . . Books were stacked under tables, piled up on beds, heaped in bundles on both sides of the stairways, pressed three and four deep in bookcases and onto ceiling-height shelving that lined every room and all hallways. Every room was awash with teetering piles of books, tied bundles of pamphlets, and stacks of magazines, so that we had to inch our way along trails hacked into a bookman's jungle" (quotation from Robert Vosper by Basbanes, p. 22). It sounds disturbingly similar to the Collyers' place.

The Collyers both died in 1947—Langley Collyer had perished beneath a pile of books and bundled newspapers that had collapsed on him as he crawled through a tunnel amid the warren of piled up rubbish. But the Collyers were not alone in their obsession. Within two decades, a more famous New Yorker began to accumulate a trove that some might also consider to have been largely junk. Andy Warhol is an artist whose work largely consisted of silk screens of images from newspapers and Polaroid photographs. He is famous for his paintings depicting Marilyn Monroe, Jackie

Kennedy, and Chairman Mao, as well as Campbell's soup cans and Brillo boxes. A habitué of Studio 54 in its heyday, he photographed many celebrities (from Mick Jagger to Liza Minelli), which he converted into silk-screen images that became his "art."

All this time, he was frequenting flea markets and junk stores on the far west side of Manhattan, purchasing a huge number of items which filled many rooms at his five-story townhouse on East 66th Street. Following Warhol's death in 1987, Sotheby's was commissioned to auction his personal estate. The auction catalog required six volumes to describe the 6,000 items sold in 2,500 lots and auctioned over 10 days April 23-May 3, 1987. All told, the auction generated over $25,000,000.

It might be said that Warhol was somewhat more discriminating than were the Collyer brothers. For example, he collected 175 cookie jars, charitably described as "kitsch," which sold in total for $247,830. He favored cookie jars in the shape of animals, characterized in the *New York Times* (Rita Reif, April 25, 1988) as "pigs, mice, goats, sheep, Humpty Dumpty, and a plump panda." In contrast with the Collyers, Warhol pulled a Rumpelstiltskin act by spinning straw into gold through the power of his own celebrity.[19]

Reading. Minor's collection seems quite modest, even disciplined, next to the Collyer and Warhol lodes. After all, though Minor did collect several other things—musical instruments, coins, meteorites, eighteenth century furniture, sheet music particularly focused on early twentieth century Chicago material—all else paled next to his books. One might conclude, then, that Minor was a great reader. With so many books and so little time, he must have read obsessively.

Here we encounter a paradox. Perhaps I first realized so in the exhibit hall of the Henry Huntington library in

Pasadena, where an early translation of *The Ship of Fools*, by Sebastian Brant (*Stultifera Navis*, 1497) was on display. I was amused to see that the first fool, to which the volume was opened, described himself as one with many books, "But fewe I rede and fewer understande." How was it that, barely a half century after Gutenberg's monumentally significant invention of moveable type, Brant could turn so satirically on book collectors? In reading Basbanes and Manguel, I was surprised to find that, odd as it may seem, book collecting by (virtual) non-readers is not uncommon.

Alberto Manguel is a collector, but also as thoughtful a reader as I know of. His book, *The Library at Night*, is a provocative meditation on books and collecting and the nature of a personal library. In this section of my reflections on Minor and his books, I really can do no better than to quote Manguel at length (pp. 253-255). I do so in the hope of being not unfair nor least of all lazy, for avoiding the errors and diminutions of excessive paraphrase when all I want is to take my reader deep within the corridors of Manguel's experience:

> My library consists half of books I remember and half of books I have forgotten. Now that my memory is not as keen as it used to be, pages fade as I attempt to conjure them up. Some vanish from my experience entirely, unrecalled and invisible. Others haunt me temptingly with a title or an image, or a few words out of context. What novel begins with the words "One spring evening of 1890"? Where did I read that King Solomon used a looking-glass to discover whether the Queen of Sheba had hairy legs? Who wrote that peculiar book *Flight into Darkness*, from which I remember only the description of a blind corridor full of birds flapping their wings? In what story did I read

> the phrase "the lumber room of his library"? What volume showed a burning candle on the cover, with thick crayons on cream-coloured paper? Somewhere in my library are the answers to these questions, but I have forgotten where.
>
> Visitors often ask if I've read all my books; my usual answer is that I've certainly opened every one of them. The fact is that a library, whatever its size, need not be read in its entirety to be useful; every reader profits from a fair balance between knowledge and ignorance, recall and oblivion . . . I know that my books have unlimited patience. They will wait for me till the end of my days. They don't require that I pretend to know them all . . .

In short, to collect books, Minor needed to be no more a great reader than Warhol, collecting cookie jars, needed to be a great cookie eater.

But how much did he read? Reading tends to be a private affair, often done in the evenings and even in bed before the lights go out. The *Chicago Tribune* said of him: "Born in Copley Ohio, Mr. Myers was a bookworm from the start, when he would collect fireflies in a jar and use their light to read after dark."[20] I never heard that anecdote elsewhere, and don't know where the *Trib* picked it up. On the other hand, Minor did bring "reading material" to the office, in the form of auction catalogs from *Sotheby's, Christie's,* and so on. He would sit in meetings he would rather not be attending, open a catalog in his lap, and peruse listings in order to call in after the auction and offer below minimums for unsold lots, all the time feigning a listener's participation in the meeting agenda. I never saw him read anything with deep engagement. That doesn't mean he didn't do so, I just never

saw it. The jury is out on the role his library played in his reading, but I doubt if he had read most of it.

Research. There is a general view that, although researchers in many areas are certainly dependent on prior publications, they often prove not to be collectors of books themselves: Basbanes quotes from A. S. W. Rosenbach, a noted bookseller, "It is paradoxical, but true, that not a single great library in the world has been formed by a great scholar" (p. 17). There may be many reasons why this is so. An obvious one is that scholars tend not to be wealthy. J. P. Morgan and Henry E. Huntington, in contrast, were businessmen who acquired immense personal wealth and chose to spend a good deal of their fortunes collecting books and art work.

Lesser collections, however, have often been developed by scholars, in the particular areas of their interest and expertise. Basbanes cites Michael Sadleir as one example. Sadleir said that "I have never undertaken the intensive collection of any author or movement without the intention of ultimately writing the material collected into biography, bibliography or fiction." So there you have it, Rosenbach. Some scholars are collectors too. And what about Minor?

Here it would seem the evidence comes in looking for a correspondence between Minor's interests in research and writing, and the content of his book collection. Minor's published books, both authored and co-authored, consisted of the following:

• *History of Calvary Church, Stonington* (1973) pub. Calvary Churchwomen, Stonington CT

• (with Edgar Mayhew) *New London County Furniture (1974)* pub. The Lyman Allyn Museum

• (with Edgar Mayhew) *A Documentary History of American*

Interiors from the Colonial Era until 1915 (1980) pub. Charles Schribner's Sons

• *Liberty Without Anarchy: A History of the Society of the Cincinnati (1983/ 2004)* pub. University of Virginia Press

• (with Willard Thorp) *The Princeton Graduate School: A History* (1996) pub. Princeton UP

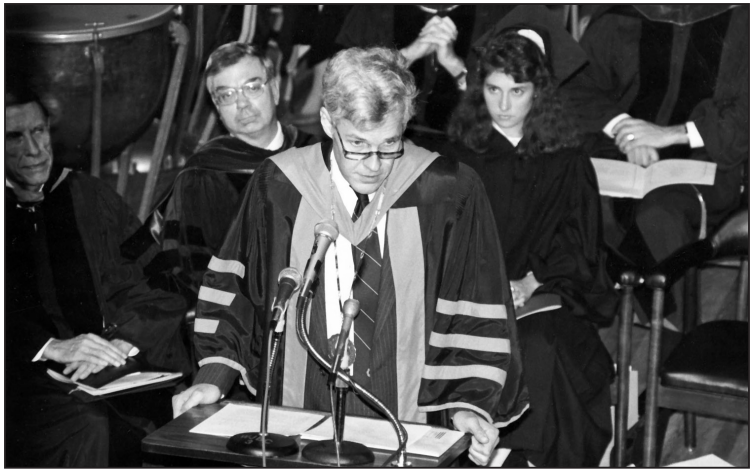
• *The Insignia of the Society of the Cincinnati* (1998) pub. The Society of the Cincinnati

• (with Arnold Thackrey) *Arnold O Beckman: One Hundred Years of Excellence* (2000) pub. Chemical Heritage Foundation

• (with Carl Teichman) *Illinois Wesleyan University: Continuity and Change, 1850-2000* (2001) pub. Illinois Wesleyan University

This is an interesting—even curious—list. Minor completed a Ph.D. in politics and political philosophy at Princeton in 1972. His dissertation was titled "British Laws of Nature, 1640-1785." Most of the scholars with whom I am acquainted, particularly those in the social sciences and humanities, start their academic careers working intensely to convert their dissertations into books by way of establishing their cases for tenure which will need to be presented within seven years (Minor actually joined the Connecticut College faculty in 1968: presumably, his tenure case would be facing him in 1975 at the latest.)

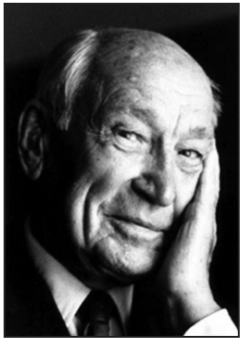
Rather than pursuing a scholarly career stemming from his academic training and his dissertation topic, however, straight off he chose to work on a history of the Stonington, Connecticut, Calvary Church, and the local furniture of New London County, as seen in the collection of the local Lyman Allyn Museum. Over the years there have been a few



Minor's Inauguration address, September 13, 1989

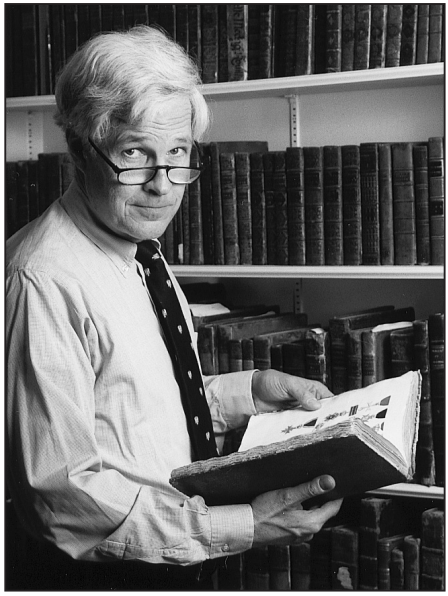
University guests from left to right: Igor Kipnis, Chuck Pell, Susan Keiffer

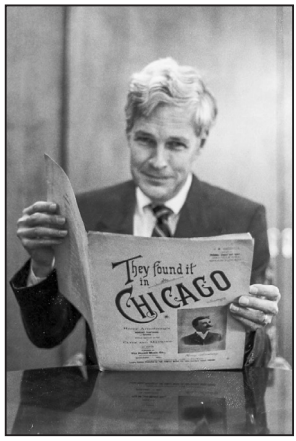
Sir Edward Heath



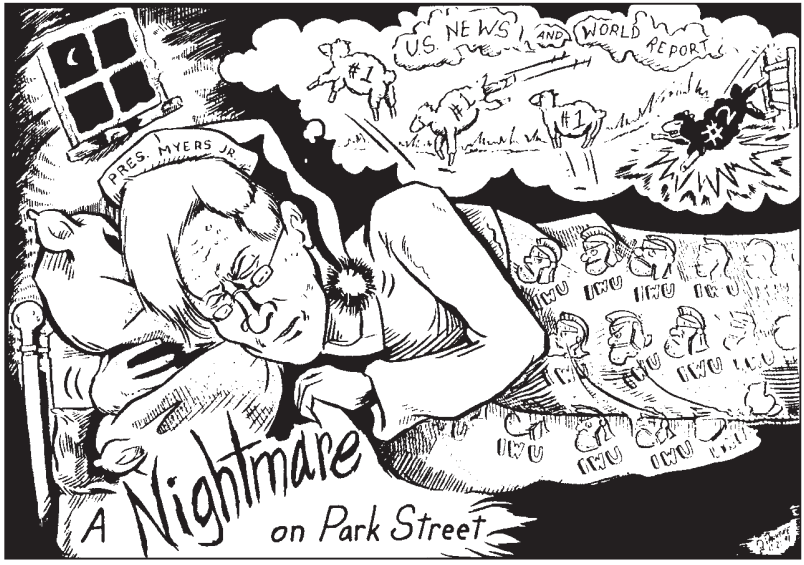
Arnold Beckman

Dawn Upshaw

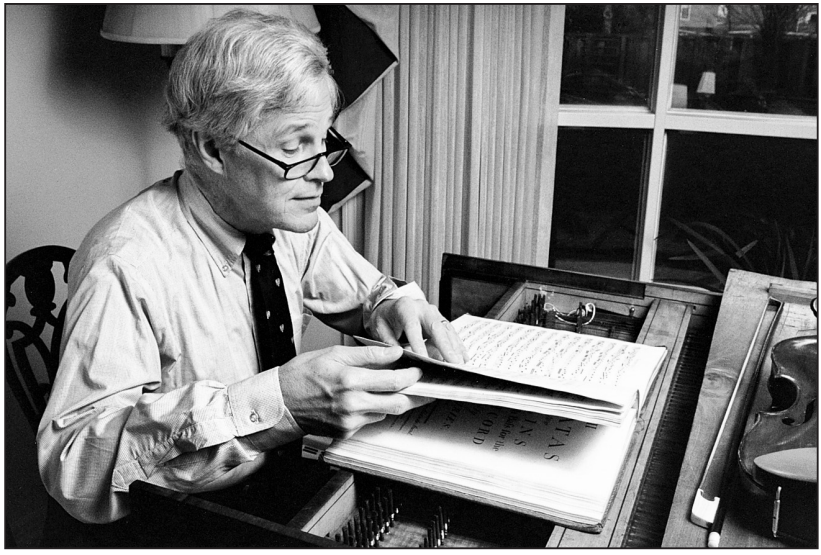




Minor perusing a volume in front of shelves holding leather-bound books

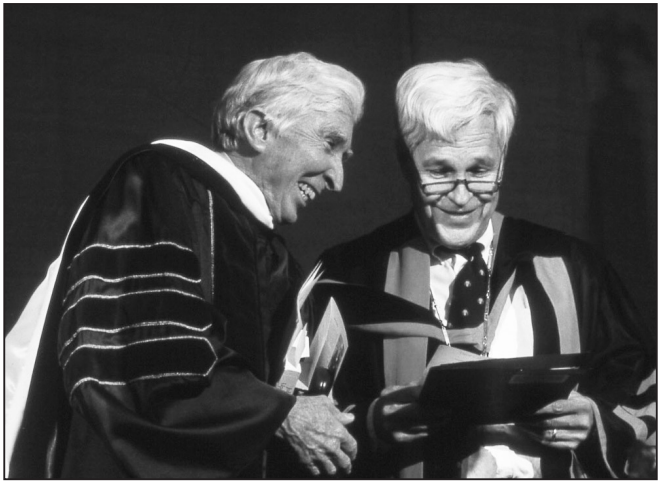


Argus cartoon, captioned "Tossing and turning: President Minor Myers jr. loses sleep over the possibility of IWU losing its No. 1 ranking in *U.S. News and World Report*" (1991).

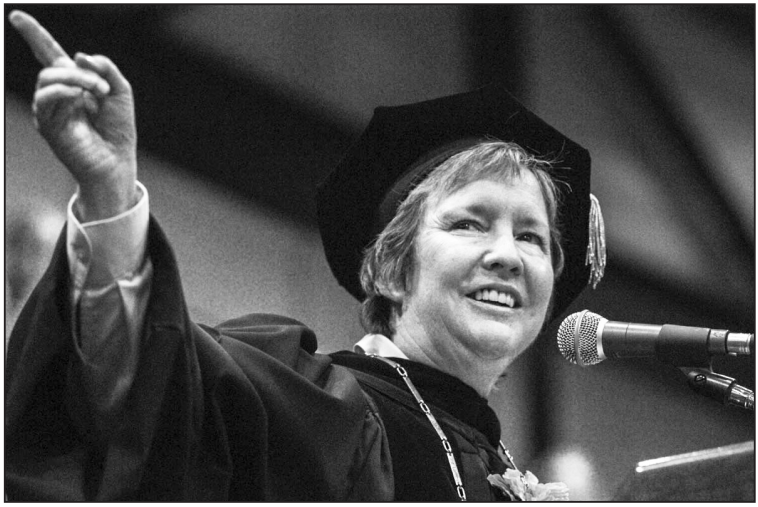


Minor at his 1787 harpsichord in the living room at 1201 Park Street, Bloomington.

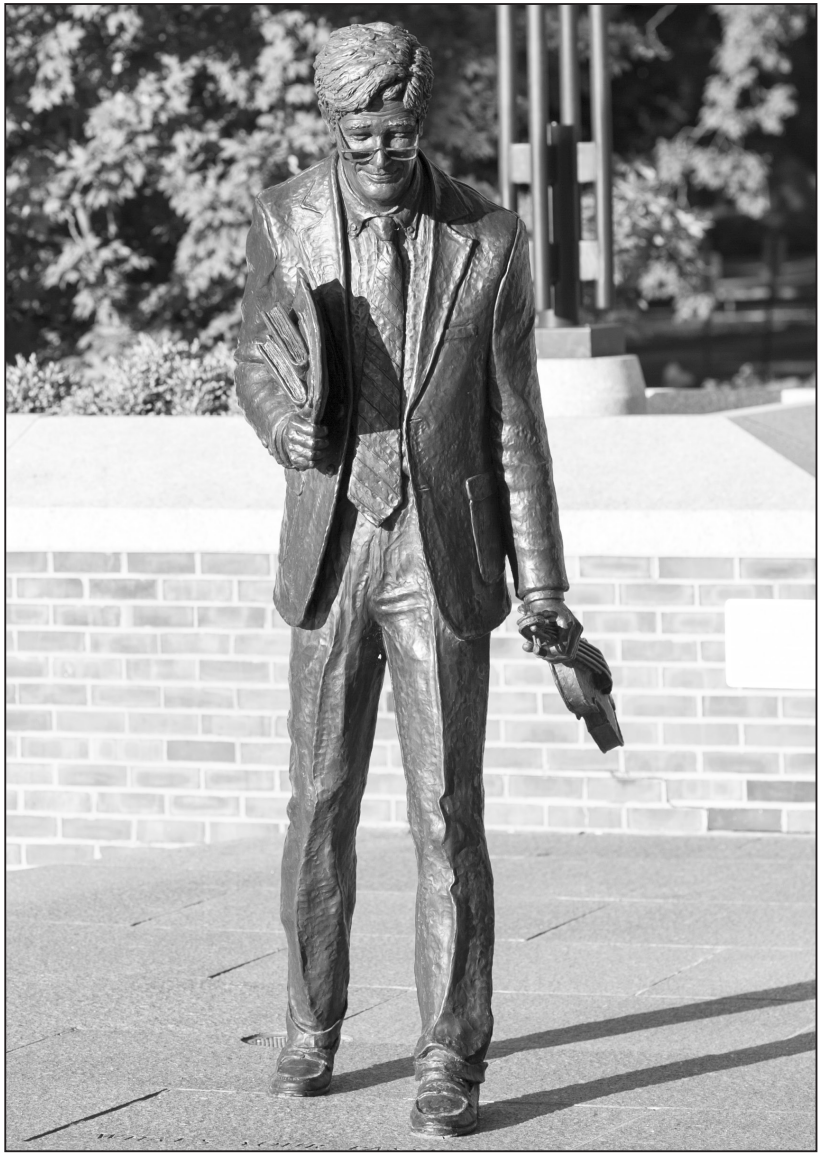
Comparing violins with Vadim Mazo, conductor of the Illinois Wesleyan University Camarata.



Minor and John Updike at the Founder's Day Convocation, held in the evening on February 11, 2002



Janet McNew, Provost from 1993-2003; Acting President, 2003-2004, and my boss through most of Minor's presidency.



The Rick Harney sculpture of Minor on the entrance plaza to The Ames Library. "What's your passion?" is engraved in the granite paving at his feet. The statue is sometimes affectionately garbed in an Illinois Wesleyan tee shirt, holding a dog leash (with dog attached), and other embellishments invented by members of the student body. It has become something of a tradition.

Ephemeral memorabilia in my possession: sheet music from an Evelyn Nesbit song, c1915; the announcement of the auction of Minor's book collection; the Myers' Christmas card of 2001 depicting one of the Pembroke windows; some postage stamps from 1939, commemorating the New York World's Fair; a panoramic postcard of the University of Chicago campus, c1904, addressed to William Eban Schultz, the faculty composer of "Alma Wesleyana"; an envelope from Minor marked "Here are some official Tabasco seeds, second generation out of Louisiana;" Baptist Association minutes from Rensselaerville NY, 1815.

intersections with the eighteenth century, but nothing that really requires a dedication to century-long and open subject matter book collecting. One must conclude that Minor's training as an academic scholar had little to do with his collector's passion, nor did it in any significant way fuel the research leading to his various publications.

Posterity. Great collections are sometimes created with the eventual intent that they be preserved, intact. To serve such an end, sometimes collections are bequeathed to museums—for example, at his death in 1969 Robert Lehman donated 2,600 works to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The collection was so extensive that a dedicated wing was added to display the major works of the collection. Down Fifth Avenue from the Met, the Frick Collection is housed in the former home of Henry Clay Frick, who died in 1919; his wonderful collection, including three Vermeers, is now open to the public. Uptown from the Met, Ronald Lauder opened the Neue Gallery in a Beaux Arts residence acquired for this purpose; it displays a collection of Klimt, Schiele, and others representing German and Austrian art in the early twentieth century (it is one of my favorite destinations when visiting New York City).

On the other hand, J. P. Morgan both gave a huge quantity of artwork to the Metropolitan Museum, which has been blended into the collections as a whole, and in addition built a library in the Murray Hill district of Manhattan for his book collection, endowed it, and included several notable paintings and other art works along with the books. Henry E. Huntington followed a related course in southern California, and the Folger Shakespeare Library located next to the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. was established by Henry Clay Folger and his wife to house their exemplary collection of Shakespearean materials. It all depends on the

magnificence of one's possessions and the ability to provide financially for the collection's future.

In the case of libraries, some purchase major collections. In other cases, in settling estates, the books and papers of notables (frequently authors) are gifted to libraries for their special collections, or sold to them at reduced and negotiated prices. It should be said, with a note of sadness, that Minor seemed to care little about preserving his posterity. Somehow, down deep, he must have realized that a significant part of his work was as much "cheap" as it was "special," and due to the century-long spread of the collection, it had no particular focus that might interest a library.

For six months he knew he was dying, during which time he might have made arrangements with Illinois Wesleyan, Hobart and William Smith, Connecticut, or Carleton colleges, to accept the gift of his collection. But he may have realized that in many respects it was not so rare as all that, not so special as to require The Ames Library to be reconstructed to provide an appropriate haven for the "The Minor Myers jr Collection: An Eighteenth Century Miscellany." Nothing was proposed. Nothing was offered. Nothing was negotiated. Minor died intestate regarding the disposition of his library.[21]

Autobiography. This gentle madness of book collecting does not seem necessarily to be driven by intense reading, or diligent research interests; nor for the desire to preserve one's life work into posterity. Perhaps something more personal is at work. Alberto Manguel, whose book *The Library at Night* has been for me the most insightful exploration of the nature of the personal library, points out that such a library is in a certain respect an autobiography. In reflecting on a fresco seen in a cathedral in the south of France depicting souls approaching their last judgment with the pages of the Book

of Life in which their stories are told held before them, he concludes with the following poignant observation: ". . . our books will bear witness for or against us, our books reflect who we are and who we have been, our books hold the share of pages granted to us from the Book of Life. By the books we call ours we will be judged" (p. 194).

Manguel offers no clear guidelines on how to read the autobiography contained in a book collection. The content areas seem a likely place to begin, but in subjects Minor's books were all over the map. A few things do stand out as clearly autobiographical: the Japanese phrase books and travel guides, for instance, reflect his interest in and numerous trips to Japan where he visited Dr. Tanaka at Technos, as well as Oberin and possibly other colleges and universities.

But what about the eighteenth and nineteenth century materials? I thought I might be able to determine if he was a serious reader/collector of nineteenth century novels. Charles Dickens seemed a good place to start: Dickens was prolific, and many serious readers have complete sets of all 15 novels. To my surprise, then, I found neither *Oliver Twist* nor *Great Expectations* but only *Nicholas Nickleby* and *Dombey and Son* from among the fifteen. Jane Austin was represented just by *Sense and Sensibility*, Anthony Trollope by only one of the Barsetshire novels. Switching to American writers of the nineteenth century, we do a little better with three Nathaniel Hawthorne novels (though not including *The Scarlet Letter*), but nothing from Herman Melville or Mark Twain. Frankly, Minor's collection of literature seemed fragmented and largely hit and miss. Perhaps the autobiographical links existed elsewhere.

But the bulk of the collection also appears hit and miss. Carl Teichman and I once accompanied Minor to a favorite used

bookstore somewhere in Washington, D.C., where I watched him browse and pull out books for purchase. So far as I could determine he wasn't searching for anything in particular, just browsing and waiting for little jolts of desire to strike. Perhaps he was picking out things that he felt had a thematic relationship to other materials he had already collected. Or, perhaps he was simply opening himself to those fortuitous accidents of unexpected discovery; who's to tell.

Except for the music materials, the library that he accumulated appears not to have had any clear organization to it, although it has been said that he knew where many (most? all?) of his books were located and could pull titles from the shelves with minimal searching. Such a talent might signal the existence within the library of an autobiography, but from this ill-formed collection it remains a near insuperable task to fathom the nature of his intellectual pursuits. He appeared to want a little of everything and could mix a sauce for any taste from a seemingly random selection drawn from his shelves. Polymathy or attention-deficit disorder: you decide.

Music is an exception to this randomness, however, and Minor's collection of early music of the eighteenth century, often performed on the harpsichord, starts to fit together with Minor's life, as did the books on coin collecting, railroading, and other hobbies he pursued. Most other topical emphases seem less clearly grounded in his life. He had over a thousand books on food, recipes, cuisine—oddly enough, these were rostered as "early books on food, together with books on social usage, proper language, and beauty." He must have seen relationships in this diversity.

Some of these titles were eighteenth century (e.g. Hannah Glasse), but much was nineteenth century and even twentieth century. Some of the books came from Akron

Ohio, where he grew up: recipes furnished by the Ladies First Congregational Church of Akron (1913); Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic, General Voris Circle No 71 (1916); Young Women's Christian Association O.B.A. ("Our best always;" 1910). I admit to having one similar volume, The Beloit Federation of Women Cook Book (1914), Beloit Wisconsin being the community where my mother grew up. But Minor himself, though he might have been capable of making a cup of tea, gave little evidence of being able to fry an egg. It seemed that Minor and Ellen frequently ate out, most typically at Chinese buffets where meals could be had for under $5 a person. Once he took several of the Holmes Hall lunch crowd to his then-current favorite, Hot Wok Express, near the former Cub Foods store.

It was to my surprise, then, when I found a file in the Myers archives labeled "Ketchup." It contained a manuscript of just five pages, titled "American Classics No. 2—Catsup." It gave a brief synopsis from what seemed to have been the first mention of a tomato-based sauce in 1805 to the appearance of a definition in Webster's dictionary of 1848, "a liquor extracted from mushrooms, tomatoes &c. used as a sauce." A little more looking turned up another Food Classic, this No. 1, titled "Happy as a Clam—Classic Clam Chowders," with the named co-authors Ellen and Minor Myers jr following. Contrasted with the mere five pages devoted to Ketchup, this manuscript is fully fifteen pages in length, and includes a four-page introduction followed by recipes both brief ("Marion Harland 1871: clams, pork crackers (no potatoes) cayenne, wine, catsup walnut or butternut pickles") and expansive. Perhaps there was a hidden side to the Myers home table of which we knew nothing.

Conclusion: Why did Minor collect books? Granted that Minor was a salvager, I want to believe he had some motive

greater than that. But the short answer is, from his pattern of collecting, I couldn't determine why he collected books. I find no evidence of a convincing and explicit connection between any of the various motivations I have reviewed and his undisciplined eighteenth century mania. Of course, most of the 13,000 items in his collection were not from the eighteenth century. He had a number of volumes from the seventeenth century, and a few from the sixteenth century.[22] But there were plenty from the nineteenth century, and even more from the twentieth.

He loved the eighteenth century, but he had plenty of shelf space for many other things. And he did pursue some specific topics. For one, we need remember the cookbooks. Our count came to 1,049 of them, and when we auctioned the collection, I walked away with a 1755 edition of Hannah Glasse's, *The Art of Cookery, Made Plain and Easy (which far exceeds any Thing of the Kind ever yet published)*.

To say he collected books (with the public conceit that it was all eighteenth century when it wasn't) is just to say he had a passion for books, he had a passion for the eighteenth century, for the very *idea* of the eighteenth century. He liked the music of the era that he played on his 1787 harpsichord, he wrote about and collected colonial Connecticut furniture, he liked the Enlightenment political philosophy that led to the Constitution of the United States and all the arguments of the *Federalist Papers*, the passion of Thomas Paine and the great Colonial polymaths Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin among others, and at least the *idea* of the cuisine if not the reality of it. He just liked—he reveled in—the whole thing. Nonetheless there is little evidence that he was a deep scholar of the period. There's no fault in that, and whatever

his motivations it provided Minor with a great sense of purpose and satisfaction.

I wish that my investigations had led to some grander motivation than, in his own words, "bottom feeding" from the used book market. Despite his passion, he never published a single scholarly paper based on eighteenth century sources. Yes, he had focal areas of interest: eighteenth century musical scores, cookbooks of all ages, gardening and horticulture. He is said to have owned special volumes that sent chills of excitement through him just from holding them in his hands. That must be to say that touching an original edition in some cases gave him a sense of communion with its author. I have an Elizabethan shilling that, when I hold it between my fingers, makes me wonder if it had once occupied Shakespeare's purse, but such feelings quickly pass and I move on to other things. For Minor, some of these impassioned moments seemed to be more lasting and fundamental to his nature.

Chapter 9

Beyond Books

The objects that we cherish tell stories about who we are . . . Objects are our ballast. They help keep us grounded. They make us feel secure in our own histories.

Tod Williams & Billie Tsien, Wunderkammer, 2013

The theme of these reflections is Minor Myers' passion for libraries: the public library he dreamed of and saw to its completion and opening, and the personal, his own collection of books that was worthy of being called a library itself. What he wanted to build for the University he also desired to possess for himself, with a reasonable adjustment in scale. His public and generously giving persona kept a balance with his private and perhaps covetous self. He had a passion for collecting many things, mostly books, but his collecting was diverse. As with books, he had a dream of a future public museum alongside the reality of his personal collections.

Minor dreamed about a museum for Illinois Wesleyan. He had already experienced such a reality at Connecticut College; the Lyman Allyn Art Museum on its campus holds a significant collection of nineteenth century American painting and colonial era American furniture as well as other collections. The problem was, Illinois Wesleyan neither held any notable collections, nor possessed a building available to convert into a museum.

To solve the building problem, Minor soon set his sights on the Memorial Gymnasium, largely abandoned at the time. It was ripe for a renovation, and a new museum seemed to him to be the perfect fit for the University. But the University lacked a collection! Hedding Hall had contained a small

collection of natural history material, but Hedding burned to the ground in 1943, with whatever had been collected going up in the flames.

Miraculously, a gift from John Wesley Powell, our onetime professor who had become the first Director of the Bureau of Ethnology at the Smithsonian Institution, was not in Hedding at the time of the fire. That collection of de-accessioned southwestern pottery remains, and is on display in the rotunda on the entry floor of The Ames Library. It has been appraised at over $1 million, in large part due to the provenance established by the stiff paper labels with the nineteenth century imprint, "Bureau of Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution."

Minor had aspirations for the University to receive a significant gift from Dr. John T. Gernon of Evanston Illinois, a retired physician and lifelong collector of paintings, blue and white Chinese porcelain, and other objets d'art. Minor had made a habit of driving up to Chicago and dropping in on Gernon, who used a wheelchair. Gernon had plans other than Illinois Wesleyan for his collections, however, and in 1994 when he died at age 89 left everything to his loyal nurse. The University did receive a set of French lithographic posters, which were briefly shown in the Merwin Gallery when they came to the University. The most valuable was one of Alphonse Mucha's famous depictions of Sarah Bernhardt. This poster, which held a value of perhaps as much as $25,000, disappeared when the Director of Print Services sent it out to be copied for the cover of a School of Theatre Arts program. It never made it back to the security of the University's archival storage facilities. The loss was not investigated, and it is my guess that someone stole it.

At one point, Minor and the Provost Ellen Hurwitz devised a scheme to appoint a new, full-time "Dean of Collections" to

oversee the non-existent collection installed in the imaginary renovation of our former gym. On one occasion following an animated conversation over lunch in the Faculty Dining Room, they even offered the position to a respected member of the humanities faculty who happened to be sitting nearby. That scheme, however, was quickly scuttled.

The whole idea came to naught. The dilemma is, what needs to come first: the collection, or the museum? Both the Lyman Allyn Museum and its major holdings were given by Harriet Upson Lyman in memory of her father, who had been a wealthy businessman and art collector. She had the money, and she had the art. Nobody built a museum or hired a director in hopes that such actions would stimulate a donation of sufficient artworks to warrant all the preparations.

Minor's wonderful dream—and who could have objected to another Harriet Lyman appearing on our scene—was stillborn. The Memorial Gym was eventually converted into a student center. Unlike the dreamed of art collection, ample students to populate a new student center were already at hand, and Minor was left with his own collecting to keep himself busy.

And indeed he did collect. The eighteenth century Connecticut furniture came with the Myerses from New England. Many sales receipts and appraisals for insurance purposes can be found in the archives. "English Hepplewhite mahogany, three-part banquet table, circa 1795," and "Chippendale cherry block front chest of drawers, attributed to Samuel Loomis, Colchester, Connecticut, circa 1780-1790" are typical.

The archives contain a long inventory of coins, much too numerous to review, but including 49 pieces of American coinage dating from 1776-1799. In the Myers family room at the President's House, the walls were hung with a variety

of dented and beat up brass instruments, apparently most from the nineteenth century. Largely out of sight, Minor also collected stringed instruments mainly by English makers, primarily violins. Included in his collection were an English violin by Charles & Samuel Thompson (c1787); a John Dodd viola bow; a Francois Breton violin, and many others.

Other collections included a substantial number of meteorite specimens; stereopticon cards; Roman coinage; eighteenth and nineteenth century American portraiture; railroading ephemera; and a large collection of bound scores from college operettas, written and produced by student organizations (The University of Chicago Blackfriars, "Pranks of Paprika," 1913; The Princeton University Triangle Club, "When Congress went to Princeton," 1908; and The Hasty Pudding Club of Harvard University, "Pudding on the Ritz," 1932, for example). Enough there to keep even an aggressive collector happy most of the time.

Basho42. As luck would have it, I seem to have been the person who introduced Minor to eBay. This would have been around 1996 or 97, after we had installed the campus-wide fiberoptic computer network. 1995 was the first time we could access the World Wide Web from our desktops—"going on the web" became, for a time, an expression of the latest in computer savvy. The main virtue of "the web" was that it allowed unlimited use of photographs. Many websites popped up that exploited this new opportunity, among then eBay, which began as a glorified flea-market with all manner of used material available in an auction format, where prospective buyers could bid to their heart's content.

Usage of the site has evolved over the years: today, for many people, it is a place to find clothing and a variety of other categories of new merchandise available at cut-rate prices. No bidding, just buying. But in the early days, it was online

auctions more or less exclusively. For a collector like Minor, it was a goldmine. No longer did one have to make endless visits to flea markets (or Bloomington's own Third Sunday Market) to find treasures at bargain prices. Thousands, perhaps tens of thousands of items were available, twenty-four hours a day.

I was bidding as well. My special interest was old postcards, referred to in the trade as RPPCs (real photo post cards). Postcards were permitted by the postal code only in about 1895. They didn't exist before that. The earliest illustrated postcards allowed only the address on the back, and tended to have fronts with an illustration to the left and a place to write a message to the right. The illustrations were typically artist renderings, printed mechanically in a lithographic process. But appearing in the early years of the twentieth century, and coming to predominate by 1905 or so, real photos were printed on the front, as the regulations on the back came to allow a message field to the left and an address field to the right.

By "real photos" I mean, the postcards were actual photographic emulsions that were developed as print film. Actually, popular camera companies like Kodak sold home developing devices along with their cameras, and the paper photo stock that consumers could purchase came with postcard backs already printed. Thus, RPPCs were not only commercially produced with multiple prints of single images, there were also home photos, taken by people with their first cameras, and sent through the mail to friends and relatives, one-of-a-kind.

Minor and I shared notes on our respective collecting interests; mine was Oscar Wilde. In 1891, Wilde had written a one-act play in French, "Salomé," on the biblical story of Salomé and the beheading of John the Baptist. In 1894

Alfred Douglas, Wilde's lover, translated it into English. It was considered outrageously decadent, and performance was banned in England. Of course, such treatment at the hands of government censors was sure to spur public interest, and "Salomé" fever swept England and the continent. In particular, modern dancers seemed all to have their versions of The Dance of the Seven Veils, which was risqué, if not borderline obscene.

By 1905, Richard Strauss had written an opera in which a German translation of Wilde's play served as the libretto; in 1907 a second version in Wilde's original French premiered. Mary Garden and other leading divas of the opera vied to perform the role, which called for at least momentary nudity as the seventh veil falls away at the end of the dance. All quite daring, to be sure.

I had become interested in collecting from amidst this furor as many postcards depicting "Salomé" as I could find. What I discovered was that a young woman by the name of Maud Allan was a leading performer of the Salomé dance. Canadian born (possibly in 1873) and raised in San Francisco, her brother had been convicted and hung for committing two murders in that city. She abandoned what had been her intended career as a pianist and began dancing. Salome became her specialty.

I shared this information with Minor, who had never heard of Maud Allan. He wondered if I had really confused the name of Maud Adams. But he did some checking and found I was correct. He photocopied the Maud Allan entry in a *Who's Who in the Theatre*, c1922, and gave it to me, as if to confirm that I had known what I was talking about.

Registering with eBay as an approved bidder/buyer required creating a pseudonymous "handle" with which one made bids. Sometimes, in bidding on a particular item, a given handle

would appear again and again. It was one's competition. In the mid-90s it was possible to do a search on the bidding activity of anyone as identified by their handle. It has been fifteen years or more since I did that, but it proved useful on several occasions. Another bidding interest of mine was RPPCs taken by John Dedrick in the 1906-08 period. These were photos of Native Americans in their tribal dress, before their tepees, on horseback, and so on. Many of them were strikingly good, and captured authentic native American life. Today, Dedrick offerings on eBay are almost exclusively "Buy it now" listings at $150 to $200 each. But in the period I am discussing, everything was offered at auction.

I discovered that a frequent competitor in this bidding was someone using the handle, "amakahai." I have no idea who this individual was, except that he had a broad interest in Oklahoma materials and thus I assume he was a resident of that state or at least had grown up there. I found that checking on amakahai's bids was a shortcut to finding various items I might also want to bid on. Usually amakahai outbid me, but I did win a few items against him.

One day, Minor told me that his eBay handle was "Basho42." Basho was the Japanese poet who wrote a journal sprinkled with haiku that chronicled a walk of a thousand or more miles, much translated and published in English with variant titles but often "Narrow Road to the North Country." It dates from the late seventh century. "42" was Minor's birth year, 1942, a detail we shared as it is my birth year also. I'm not sure why he shared this information with me. I certainly didn't ask for it. But, once having it, it was quite impossible to resist doing a search to see just what Minor was following, if not bidding on. I was quite amazed by what I found.

My one-time foray into the bid list for Basho42 turned up the auctions with end dates from June 17, 1999 through

July 26, 1999—about five weeks in an eBay bid history that would have extended over five or six years. It was an interesting list to consider, all 56 items that he was bidding on. The list included eleven stereopticon views, mostly historical buildings in New England and some railroad items. The list wasn't overpoweringly bibliocentric, though about twenty percent of the items were books of one sort or another. Cookbooks caught his eye more than anything. Eighteenth century volumes are infrequent, perhaps led by John Burgoyne's play, *The Heiress*, of 1786. BookFinder turns up several copies that are currently available, priced from $35 to just over $200 depending on condition, so it is not exceptionally rare.

Then there is *The Works of John Locke* from 1787. The About Books appraisal of the key volumes in Minor's library includes four Locke items with eighteenth century publication dates, but nothing called "The Works." Recent editions under this title go on for eleven volumes. Not rare at all. Then we have the title most intriguing to me, *Adventures of Peregrine Pickle*, from 1773, described elsewhere as "a picaresque novel by the Scottish author Tobias Smollett." This is a later edition—it was first published in 1751. Description of the story makes it sound like a great romp through some very naughty behavior engaged in for selfish amusement alone. And at $3.25, it sounds like a great bargain, especially for anyone looking to buy cheap from the eighteenth century. It appears that he won this item, as a 1773 edition of this title appears on the master list of volumes included in the 2005 auction of his collection (item number 10,210).

Overall, it is impossible to tell just how many lots among these 56 bids he actually won. Unlike amakahai, I didn't see that Minor's eBay interests would be worth following, and so this was the only time I looked at his bidding record.

Chapter 10

Planning a New Library

Minor told an historical anecdote on many occasions that seemed to express a strongly held sentiment. I don't know exactly where it came from, and my attempts to track it down have so far been unsuccessful. I'll do the best I can to capture Minor's way of telling it.[23] "The Earl of Chesterfield once had the idea to put in a row of oak trees bordering his estate. He spoke to his gardener and recommended the scheme, to which the gardener replied, 'But sire, it will take a hundred years for them to mature,' to which Chesterfield responded, 'Then by all means, begin at once: we haven't a moment to spare.'"

This was Minor's feeling about many things: once we have a good idea, "There isn't a moment to spare. Begin at once; time's a wasting!" Minor had already waited for the completion of the Shirk Center for Athletics and Recreation, and the Center for the Natural Sciences. He had been patient. But now, it was the library's turn. He wanted action.

By this time, my standing as overseer of academic building projects had solidified to the point that I was routinely brought in for coordinating responsibilities. Thus, I participated in the consultant visit, but primarily to listen and become informed rather than to make much of a contribution. The librarians were the experts on the space needs for a new library, just as the science faculty had been empowered to determine the needs in a new science building.

At this time Sue Stroyan (now Anderson) was University Librarian. She was authorized to bring in a consultant to

work with us in evaluating the current facility and developing a space program for a new building. The consultant she nominated, who was approved by Provost Janet McNew, was Joel Clemmer, Director of the DeWitt Wallace Library at Macalester College in St. Paul Minnesota. The final product of his consultancy was a program for a new library.

If you aren't familiar with architectural terminology, the "program," or "space program," for a building is a description of all the spaces required to meet the objectives a new building is being designed to fulfill. The program specifies the "assignable square footage" of each program space that when aggregated gives the building's total assignable area, also referred to as the "net square feet," as distinguished from the total or gross square footage, which is a measurement of total area to the outside of the exterior walls. Gross square footage, then, includes all the unassigned space, including hallways, mechanical rooms, custodial closets, the thickness of walls consumed in defining the assignable spaces—all the things that architects need to include in their design, but that are generic and not specifically related to the space needs that have been the drivers behind approval of the project in the first place.

The program for a new library included twelve categories of space, with an estimated total (net assignable) square footage of 65,208. Clemmer assisted our group not only in defining the different categories of space, but in generating plausible estimates for the areas required for each type of space. Further study of the space program tells the story of the purposes to

be achieved in the new building. Here are three examples from among the twelve space categories.

Collections and Access. At 29,765 square feet, this is the largest assignable space in the building. It is the space required to contain the book collection, the very heart of any library, allowing for expansion to the final capacity set for the new building. The function of the space, as described in Clemmer's program document, is as follows:

> *Function*. As the heart of the library, space is provided for aggressive growth of the collections to 400,000 volumes over twenty years. Bound periodicals will be shelved with the corresponding circulating book collections so that research information is brought together. Access stations will be clustered in the stacks so that topical digital information also is available in the same area, ensuring a user friendly integration of traditional library resources with related electronic tools.
>
> *Design*. Assume standard library cantilevered metal shelving. Provide space for minimum three foot aisles as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Keep the collections away from unfiltered sunlight to the extent possible so as to preserve them. Arrange a clear, simple layout in accordance with the sequential library classification scheme so that users can find particular books easily. Bound, older periodicals will be shelved with the circulating collection.

Information Commons. By the mid-'90s, when this space program was being developed, information technology was moving ahead aggressively in library science. Illinois

Wesleyan had initiated installation of a campus-wide fiber optic backbone for a local area network. Networking within every building on campus was proceeding and was soon to be completed. The campus network was connected to the Internet where the World Wide Web had revolutionized information access. The early versions of a national network—ARPANET, BITNET, NSFNET among a few others—were essentially invisible to the community at Illinois Wesleyan University. It wasn't until the early 1990s that the very term "Internet" was clarified and defined in a way that facilitated widespread adoption of the required protocols.

As the campus network became more fully operational, e-mail was the major application adopted by campus users, via a messaging system called "Gopher," named for the University of Minnesota sports mascot, where the system had been developed. It was primitive and not very user friendly. The first popular web search engine was Lycos, which became available in 1993. WebCrawler and Yahoo were founded in 1994. Altavista joined in 1995. All these search engines competed for usage, and each had some strengths as well as limitations.

It wasn't until 1998 that Google joined the fray, and soon came to dominate the search engine market. That was two years *after* we completed our space program for the new library. These changes are a measure of the dizzying progress that was occurring in the technology of information search and retrieval. We were not quite sure what the final form of the information system in the new library would be, but we knew that we wanted to saturate the building with electronic

information retrieval capabilities. The key part of the space program was dubbed the "Information Commons."

> *Function.* While the print reference collection will be prominent, library users will also tap into a full range of digital information resources at scholarly workstations, designed for both individual and small group work. Project rooms for six or eight occupants will allow collaboration and digital access. Students and faculty will learn the latest research methodologies through demonstration and hands-on experience in the instruction lab. Librarians at the service desk will assist users. Offices for technical support and document delivery support related library services.
>
> *Design.* Each scholar workstation will be sized for two seats and will encourage interaction and communication with the service desk. The reference collection will utilize counter shelving for convenience and to maintain visual control of the area from the desk, if space allows. The desk will present a service face to both the collections and the entry. The instructional lab will also be visible from the desk and will support projection from a LCD panel, zoned and dimmed lighting, visual control of user seats by the instructor or monitor, shelving for documentation, and supplemental ventilation of machine heat.

As can be seen, there was little specificity at this time in respect to the type of computing equipment to be installed throughout the Information Commons. This was wise, as in

the six years between completion of the space program in 1996 and the opening of the library in December 2002, the advances in computing equipment were enormous. These details could and should wait, we presciently believed.

Archives and Special Collections. This is the last of the twelve divisions in the space program that I will describe in some detail. The archives are essentially the documentation of Illinois Wesleyan University's past. The minutes of the Board of Trustees, from the founding of the University to the present, are therein contained, also with a quantity of other historical documents. Special Collections refer to materials of rarity and value, such that they cannot safely be shelved in the open collection area. The University is open to gifts from benefactors who have collected such material and wish to contribute it to the University collections.

> *Function.* Illinois Wesleyan's important rare book and archives collections will be housed in an area facilitating their use and preservation. A specially appointed reading room will also be used as a presentation space for a wide range of campus events.
>
> *Design.* The reading area should be a specially appointed and distinguished environment that can also be used for college functions. Specially designed bookcases with selected items from the collection would be appropriate to the room. The collections, except those on display, can be housed in compact shelving, if necessary, and should be protected from uncontrolled access. No ultraviolet light should fall on the collections and the temperature and humidity should be held to strict standards for preservation.

> A water line to the workroom and a kitchenette is needed for special events, including at least a refrigerator and sink. The workroom and kitchenette could be combined.

Minor never sat in on a meeting of the ad hoc library programming committee. He may have had an initial meeting with Clemmer, and he would have expressed his interest in a collection capacity of 400,000 volumes. He would have wanted more, but a measure of prudence no doubt came into play.

Bigger may be better, but first of all bigger is more expensive. Expense was an issue facing Minor, as the size of the fundraising challenge ahead needed to be addressed. He felt there was a promising source of funding with the Franklin W. Olin Foundation[24]. Between the inception of the foundation in 1938 and its last grant, the Olin Foundation funded 78 building projects on 58 college and university campuses. There were two controlling requirements necessary for the foundation to consider a proposal. First, the foundation needed to fully fund the project. Second, the resulting building would be named after Olin. At the time of its last grant, the cap for grants (which is also to say, the price tag on all viable projects) was $16 million.

As was the case with the Beckman Foundation, the F. W. Olin Foundation was run by a small board of three members. These were Lawrence (Minor always referred to him as Larry) W. Milas, William Norden, and William Schmidt. It must have been either Norden or Schmidt who was located in Minneapolis, because Minor told me of several visits to Minneapolis to become acquainted with one of the Olin

Foundation's board members. He felt he had established a good relationship with this person, and he had submitted an application for consideration of our project that met the foundation's guidelines.

The foundation was notorious for not showing its cards prior to announcement of awards. There were no application review deadlines. The backlog of pending applications sometimes reached into the hundreds, as only two or three grants were made each year. One eventual recipient gave the board a plaque with the inscription, "No News Does Not Mean No," to characterize the feeling of a relatively helpless applicant awaiting news that might not be forthcoming for years.

It was with considerable dismay, then, when the news was circulated in 1997 that there would be no grants that year, or at any year in the future. The foundation was closing down, and it would disburse its total endowment by funding the construction of what would become the F. W. Olin School of Engineering. Larry Milas, Olin Foundation President, had been brooding over the future of the foundation, and in 1993 he surprised the board with the recommendation that they allocate the entire corpus of the Foundation's endowment to the School of Engineering project. The plan was shrouded in secrecy, presumably to avoid an onslaught of proposals as the foundation's grants program wound down. For anyone interested in the details on the demise of the F. W. Olin Foundation, a monograph has been prepared by Gloria Pollizotti Greis of the Needham, Massachusetts, Historical

Society, *From the Ground Up: The Founding and Early History of the Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering* (2009).

Thus, despite Minor's best efforts, the F. W. Olin Foundation initiative went up in smoke. Minor didn't know—essentially, no one outside the foundation board knew—the matter of closing the foundation had been under discussion since 1993, fully four years before it was announced. From the very beginning, then, IWU didn't have a chance. We just didn't know it.

But there is some solace to be taken when we look further into our project finances. Returning to the space program, recall that the program defined the assignable square footage as just over 65,000 square feet. What would the gross square footage have been? We have often used a planning number of 65 percent net to gross: in other words, the net square footage should be approximately 65 percent of the total building square footage.

This number had been too conservative for the science building, and for the new State Farm Hall project as well. 60 percent or even 55 percent allows a building with more generous public spaces, wider hallways, and an altogether more pleasant ambience. But a library has relatively few hallways, for one thing, and perhaps 65 percent would be a good planning estimate. Conveniently enough for those challenged mathematically, it is easy to see that 65,000 is 65 percent of 100,000. In other words, we would probably not be far off in estimating the final building being right around 100,000 square feet.

At a total budget cost (construction plus architectural fees, site development, and related expenses) estimated at $200

per square foot, construction of the new building would come in at $20 million. The Olin Foundation limit, however, being $16 million, would mean the cost would have to be held to no more than $160 per square foot. No doubt such a budget could be met, but only with a major compromise in regard to the quality of the project. We might have ended up with a building big enough to meet our program requirements, but one with all the allure of a cow barn. Although it felt like a major setback at the time, missing the Olin Foundation grant was a boon to the longer-term success of the project.

"Charles 'Chuck' Ames was an Illinois Wesleyan alumnus who graduated in 1950; his wife Joyce ('Jay') was also an alum. Ames was a successful businessman who ended his career as a partner of Clayton, Dubilier, and Rice. As his obituary says, "Chuck was a man of great intellectual curiosity and was one of the most published writers in the Harvard Business Review. Aside from having a prominent business career, Chuck was a philanthropist at heart." His philanthropy touched Illinois Wesleyan profoundly during his retirement years. Among several other gifts to the University, his major gift in support of the new library enabled us to move ahead with construction, which was completed in 2002. He and his family are now honored in the building's name, "The Ames Library.""

Chapter 11

Building The Ames Library

It was a bright and sunny morning in June 1996 when I sat in the basement of Stevenson Hall awaiting the first meeting of the library architectural planning committee. Before the other members of the committee had assembled, I reflected on how much of the lower floor of Stevenson had and hadn't changed over the years.

When I came to Illinois Wesleyan in fall 1969, it was as a new member in the psychology department. Stevenson Hall, constructed in 1910, originally had been the science building. The sciences had moved out in 1963, to Sherff Hall. Under the leadership of IWU School of Nursing Director Mary Shanks, the first and second floors of Stevenson had been remodeled for the School of Nursing as it made the transition from a hospital program at Brokaw Hospital to a collegiate program. The Mellon Center had adopted this space soon after the psychology department had vacated it and moved into the new Center for the Natural Sciences in October1995.

Although the upstairs had been completely rebuilt into a tasteful contemporary space, the basement, relegated to the psychology department with its rat labs, was a real cellar if not worse. Some of the walls were covered with a low-density fiber board, perhaps the kind of stuff that was once sold under the trade name BeaverBoard. They had been punched with holes, perhaps from the fists of frustrated students. Really, it was just awful. I made a final choice between offers from IWU and Beloit College, where the psychology department occupied a building from the 1850s and was hardly better than the Stevenson facility—basements and old buildings

seemed to be the fate of psychology departments in general. But IWU had become something of a research factory in the earlier years of the 1960s. Roger Ulrich, John Stachnik, and John Mabry had published a book based on the syllabi for the Wesleyan courses introducing behaviorism and behavior modification.[25] At the time, all that was right up my alley. I wasn't concerned about the appearance of the facilities. The labs were well equipped despite the ambience of squalor.

My third year at IWU, Bob Eckley had approved renovations for the psychology department. The chair of our little three-person department had left for an applied position in a facility in Maryland, and I had been appointed department head. It was my first experience with campus facilities planning. Carl Jensen and I worked out a detailed plan for the renovation for which there was such a crying need. It worked very well for the department. Although there was fresh paint and wall coverings and a lot of new furniture, the renovation for the Mellon Center's occupancy of the space kept most of the previous psychology department intact. That gave me some satisfaction, perhaps a small surge of confidence, as we embarked on planning for what was to become the magnificent Ames Library.

As a planning team was identified for this project, Provost Janet McNew had asked me to serve as project shepherd. As "shepherd," one might rightly assume that the role is oversight of the project. Many hands and eyes are engaged in institutional oversight of any project that will entail an investment of $20 million or more—and for projects much smaller than this as well. Someone close to the project has to be involved, someone who knows all the ins and outs of a facility that will be designed to meet the quite specialized needs of both faculty and students as well as

support staff. Someone with their hands dirty from years of relevant experience is needed: not the financial officer of the university, who will be watching every dollar committed to the budget; not the physical plant director, who will be carefully monitoring the design of all the engineered systems from HVAC to plumbing and electrical circuits to roofing designs that hold at least a promise of not springing leaks within a few years. It has to be someone who is an actual *user* of the facility, someone whose professional life will be inextricably intertwined with it.

The project shepherd for an academic project needs to be selected from the faculty. The best advice is, it doesn't need to be the current administrative head—the department chair, school director, university librarian, etc. Ideally, it will be a new associate professor, bright eyed and energetic, who can do her regular job and add on the many additional hours of project work without complaint but with enthusiasm for the opportunity.

The realities at Illinois Wesleyan, however, made such a prospect unlikely. At the time, the library faculty had some old timber (not dead wood, mind you) and some young upstarts, fresh but untenured and untested. There wasn't any obvious middle ground. Sue Stroyan, the university librarian, was a take-charge person who had already coordinated the Joel Clemmer consultancy and programming work. She would assume that the project shepherd job was hers. On the other hand, I was brought in due to my expanding experience with our building projects. Stroyan and I would team up to represent the academic perspective, she for her expertise in library needs, me for a broader overview on academic buildings in general. It worked out quite well. But as I waited for that first meeting to begin, little did I realize that I would

perhaps exert my greatest influence on the final character of the new library before that first morning had passed.

The meeting for which we had assembled was the first working session with the project architects. We had gone through a long and detailed process of architect selection. Many years before, at the first Project Kaleidoscope meeting I attended in Washington D.C., I spent some time in a room where various architectural firms were set up at tables to talk to prospective clients for new science buildings. I specifically recall talking to a woman representing Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson & Abbott, of Boston. She had materials to view on several projects, not only science buildings but also academic libraries.

When we did architect selection for the science building, SBRA made the short list. We visited their new chemistry/biology building at Bucknell (the school from which in 2006 we hired Provost Beth Cunningham). We had enough questions about some of the design decisions on the Bucknell building that we eventually decided not to go in that direction for science, but I had filed away a definite idea that, were we to be going through this process again regarding a campus library, SBRA would be high on my list.

As it turned out, we did find ourselves in that position five or so years later, and Sue Stroyan shared my positive opinion of SBRA. Perry Dean Rogers Partners, also of Boston, was another top-ranking firm. Perry Dean Rogers had designed a new library at Knox College, which we visited. I was especially impressed with their special collections facilities.

SBRA had designed the new Augustana library, and the Leavey undergraduate library at the University of Southern

California, both of which we visited. We also visited the engineering library at the University of Illinois, as well as the library at St. Ambrose University in Davenport Iowa, both recently designed by architects I fail to recall by name at this time. SBRA and Perry Dean Rogers were the finalists who made full presentations to our planning committee, and SBRA came out the winner. (To St. Ambrose, we owe the several rocking chairs that can be found in The Ames Library, to which our visiting committee took an immediate liking and made the decision that at IWU, we would also have some rocking chairs.)

The meeting began with introductions around the table. The SBRA presentation team had been headed by a partner of the firm, Geoff Freeman, along with some colleagues. On this day, Freeman was nowhere to be seen, and in fact never appeared on campus again. A new face joined us for the first time, and we were soon to learn that Albert Wong was the design architect assigned to the project. Albert proved to be a brilliant architect and we soon knew that our project was in excellent hands.

On our schedule for the morning was an individual campus tour that I would provide for Wong. I wanted Albert to see the range of design in the new buildings that we had been constructing. I gave special focus to the Center for the Natural Sciences, and to the Rust Residence Hall (informally called "The Harriet," maybe echoing the way one would say "The Marriott"). We may have visited Evelyn Chapel as well. I didn't take him into Shaw Hall, or even into Sheean Library.

My basic point was this: in two senses the new building was to serve as a campus gateway. First, in its physical placement, Empire Street was to be the new gateway to the university. No

longer would the "entrance" be announced by, "Turn left just after the physical plant building," or "On Main Street, kind of duck around on University Street in front of the Memorial Center," or better yet, "Try Beecher Street, you can get to a parking lot that way." Rather, we would be able to say, "As you head west on Empire, turn right on Park Street just as the magnificent new Ames Library comes into view."

In the second sense of gateway, and also in Minor's paean to this dream of the campus future, a library is truly the "gateway" to the life of the mind. It should be the most significant building on campus, and its physical structure should declare this significance for all to see. In that regard, I said to Wong as clearly and definitively as I could, the new library should, in the quality of its design and finishes, be a step above anything you have seen this morning on our campus. I don't think Wong was expecting this. I think he might have come with the idea, "small Midwestern college, not much of a reputation, probably operating on a shoestring without much budget, we'll need to be cutting corners left and right."

Our little campus tour was something that could be called "an eye-opener." I could see and hear Wong back-pedaling from his initial expectations. SBRA had just designed a residence hall at Macalester College in Minnesota, and the Harriet put it to shame. I'm pretty sure that morning I cost the project budget a million dollars, maybe two or three million. But it elevated the project from what might have been humdrum to breathtaking. Yes, we did have to fight off proposals to sheathe the interior rotunda walls with travertine and a few other quality over-reaches, but that was worth it. It's relatively easy to say "no" for budgetary reasons, and we did that on a number of occasions. But every time, I needed to

remind myself that I had set the stage for such proposals. We walked along that edge between "not good enough" and "too much of a good thing." On balance, I think we got it just about right, a strikingly well-designed library, but not an ostentatious showcase.

About the role of a project shepherd: I first encountered the term "project shepherd" when attending the Project Kaleidoscope colloquium in February 1991 that I had attended with Minor and Bob Reardon of the Board of Trustees.

Building a new facility—from concept to completion—is a big job. It is important for one person to intermediate among faculty, administrators, architects and contractors. She or he will have to attend the weekly or biweekly meetings during the period of planning and construction and deal with multiple challenges and compromises that need to be addressed. Such a person needs to be diplomatic, able to deal with and arbitrate the potential areas of conflict, and well aware of the various needs and operating styles of colleagues.

The most succinct and accurate definition of the project shepherd role I've heard was given by Arthur Lidsky, a highly regarded planning consultant for colleges and universities, at the 2010 Richmond Conference on Learning Spaces & Technology Conference: provides institutional memory, must be able to build consensus, is the project's key communicator and coordinator, as well as protector of the program, and must have access to the institutional decision-makers.

I would define the keystone of the project shepherd's responsibility as "protecting the program." What is the purpose of the facility? Whose needs are being served? Once

the building program has been created, what remains open to further development and what is non-negotiable? For example, what can be on the table when value engineering inevitably arises, and what is absolutely non-negotiable? If a range of (faculty) constituencies will use the facility, who are the foot draggers and what can be done to bring them along to support the project? Can the project be tweaked to satisfy someone's long-felt need without compromising other elements of the project? Who are the voices that need to be listened to most attentively? The most critical responsibility of the project shepherd, then, is to **protect the program**.

Stroyan and I would best be thought of as co-shepherds: we shared responsibilities. Although in an administrative sense I outranked her, to the extent possible I kept that in the background. We had ample representation of the faculty and library's point of view on our project team. The project delivered the program that we were after. I wish the archives/special collections area was a bit bigger, but with our compact shelving systems in this area perhaps the space isn't as tight as it appears.

Experience has shown that the group studies are bigger than they need be: we have sixteen rooms with seating for six in most, a few for eight, two smaller rooms for four, but they are more frequently claimed for the evening by two or three, and sometimes, even a loner. Management policies have been established to prioritize *real* groups for the group studies, but we dedicated a lot of square footage on spaces that could have been more compact. We learned a lesson from this and in State Farm Hall, which also provides much more than classrooms (a key element of the program for that facility), our group studies are typically for four, and we also provide alternative styles to meet different student preferences, such

as a set of booths (reminiscent of the booths at an old time soda fountain or maybe a current fast food provider) as well as clustered seating along sections of wide hallways.

The diversity of spaces has been well received, as all the kinds of seating are used throughout the day and well into the evening. For Ames, we might have benefited from a more flexible and mostly down-sized set of group study options. There is some "live and learn" to this lesson, and the library isn't damaged by the decisions we made; it just could have been optimized a little better.

As an institution we were fairly new to the idea of providing group study spaces for students. This development is a reflection of an ongoing evolution in collegiate pedagogy. Whereas the old style might be characterized as "attend the lecture and then go someplace alone and private to study and memorize for the upcoming exam," the new style is "empower students to take responsibility for their learning, to pursue group projects and bring presentations of their own to class." The kinds of facilities that are required to support the new learning need to evolve as well. Who is best positioned to ensure that these changes in academic culture are supported in new facilities? It seems fairly obvious to me. Defend the program!

Another feature that The Ames Library embodies, that might appear to some to have been overlooked, was actually a clear and intentional element of the building program. Our group studies are for students. But what about research space assignable to faculty? Our architect selection committee visited Joel Clemmer's library at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, where this question came up for direct discussion. Someone asked the question, "What kind of

spaces do you have for faculty research?" Our tour guide gave something of a sigh, and said, "Whatever you do, try to avoid creating assignable private faculty research spaces."

We were then treated to a characterization of what happened at Macalester. Professor Z has a fall semester sabbatical coming up, and applies for a faculty research carrel or office—a small room, perhaps 100 square feet, with shelving, a desk, and chair, perhaps with a computer although the faculty member may be expected to bring his own technology. Professor Z moves in, brings a variety of books off the open stacks and arranges them on his own shelves, and sends out for several inter-library loans as well. He is seen using the office during his fall sabbatical, sometimes diligently and late into the night, sometimes not at all. The sabbatical ends with the semester, but Professor Z doesn't vacate the facility. As he returns to his classroom responsibilities, his use of the space wanes accordingly. Summer comes. He keeps the office but never appears over the summer.

In the following year, he is still there, at least in spirit, but the evidence is, he shows up only once or twice in the semester. This can go on for years. The library (and the remainder of the faculty, who may be turned away because no space is currently available) cease to benefit. The space assignment serves mostly to grant permanent bragging rights to Professor Z, as he in one of only a privileged few who have an office in the library. And, incidentally, all the books he has taken off the shelves, are no longer available to the students. Faculty office research space can be a curse, we were cautioned by the Macalester people.

I was well acquainted with a related problem from my work on the Center for Natural Sciences. As we developed the

program for a new science building, we were keenly aware of limitations in Sherff Hall, the existing facility. The notion of the "research college" had just broken into the attention of the higher education community. A key element here is the opportunity to move beyond the group labs associated with standard elements of the academic program like general chem, bio, and physics, each with their associated labs designed to accommodate 16 to 24 students at a time, who are typically run through tried-and-true demos and experiments that can be conducted and data recorded all within the standard two- or three-hour lab session.

Students need an opportunity to move beyond that, into long-term, individualized research projects under the mentorship of the faculty. Indeed, the best model for this is the research assistant or associate, the apprentice, learning by doing under the direct tutelage of a successful scholar. What we know today is that one needn't wait until graduate school to begin this process. It can begin as an undergraduate. For some, it begins as early as sophomore year. We have had many examples at Illinois Wesleyan.

The thing that we needed in our new science building, then, was individual research labs where first-class, original, publishable research is conducted, and where undergraduate students can find a place participating on a research team led by a successful faculty member. We had no such spaces in Sherff Hall. It was difficult for faculty to do any research at all, let alone to mentor hungry, eager students.

Thus, we designed the new science building with enough research labs so that every member of the faculty would have a space to pursue research projects that would involve our students. In this process, we discussed the dangers of the

science version of the Macalester experience: the faculty member who had established claim to a lab but had effectively retired from doing science. In response, we adopted the motto, "Use it or loose it." Labs could not be kept bottled up and out of use to indulge the vanity of someone who wanted to maintain the pose of being an active scientist, but who had in effect retired from those endeavors.

The policy turned out to be easier said than implemented. Modes of research involving the mentoring of students proved to take different styles, from the large research team approach of Ram Mohan in chemistry to the more "one student at a time" approach of many others. Our noted botanist, Jon Dey, often worked alone with his extensive collection of lichens, and mentored the occasional biology major who was interested in his area, but some fields of research are more of a magnet that others. Thus, we needed to respect the interests and style of working adopted by a whole range of faculty pursuing a wide variety of research problems. In a few instances a research lab might have been idle more than not, but on balance the whole scheme has worked admirably well.

In The Ames Library, we did provide for faculty research, but not with private office spaces. In the archives/special collections suite, a room was included that was outfitted with six or so individual work spaces, with computer hookups and some bookshelf space. It was to be a cooperative center for faculty research projects. It was shared space. It was separated from the general flow of the library, providing ample privacy where a faculty member could avoid interruption and concentrate on his or her work. I haven't kept close tabs on the usage of the space, but to my knowledge it has almost never been used for the intended purpose. That seems to tell

me that, at least at Illinois Wesleyan, private space *within the library* is not a significant faculty need. I do see faculty using the collection, and the technology, in the common spaces of the library, which seems sufficient.

When the new library design had been completed, we moved to the construction phase. Felmley Dickerson was selected for construction management. At this point, we moved from planning meetings with architects to monthly construction meetings with the construction management team and an architect from SBRA who would oversee the fidelity of the construction to the detailed intentions of the construction documents. John Christensen was our supervising architect. Each month throughout the eighteen month construction period, John flew in from Boston to review construction details, to ensure conformity with the construction documents, and to answer questions that might have arisen about how to accomplish the design intent of specific details.

Illustrating this point, one of the principals at SBRA, Wagdy Anis, was (and is) an acknowledged national expert in the design of air barriers in the enclosure system—the walls, for short—of major multi-story buildings. Anis devised a wall system design informally called the "Wagdy Wall" that had been adopted by SBRA as their preferred design for exterior wall systems. Although it would carry increased construction costs relative to the more standard wall design, optimizing the air barrier system would decrease the cost of heating and cooling a building approaching 100,000 square feet in area, as well as providing a moisture barrier that would help preserve the library collection.

Thus, we agreed to adopt the system. The design had not yet become a standard for local architects, and thus

our construction management team needed careful backgrounding from Christenson and inspection of their work as the wall systems were constructed. This is just one example where the architectural firm is deeply involved in the ongoing details of construction of a project such as The Ames Library.

In quite a different vein, the curved display cabinets in the rotunda area of the entrance floor, whose purpose was to display the John Wesley Powell collection of Southwest Indian pottery, absorbed an inordinate amount of attention. The details of these cabinets had not been included in the initial architectural plan. There were special requirements for lighting, and for ventilation with adequate control to prevent accumulation of dust on the artifacts displayed in the cases.

Christensen approached the lighting problem by proposing fiber optic cables carrying light that would snake across the shelf surfaces and be positioned like tiny spotlights to illuminate the pottery. The trouble was, we couldn't find any museum exhibit installations that had taken this approach. It seemed like a new idea although Christensen thought he had seen it somewhere. We were at an impasse. I suggested another approach. In my home, we have a glass étagère with glass shelves. It has a translucent top piece behind which fluorescent bulbs are located. It seems to provide adequate lighting, all the way down. In the Ames application, there are actually only two shelves, one half the width from the front and the other half the width from the back, so the light falls unobstructed on the entire display. The down lighting

seemed like a natural solution. We went that way, and the lighting has been satisfactory.

The ventilation and dust control was less successful. We have a fan system that is designed to move air in from the bottom and exhaust it through vents at the top. There were filters of the sort that ordinary home heating systems commonly employ. Unfortunately, within several years dust had collected on the pottery pieces to the point that it had to be cleaned. This is not a job for the University custodial staff. We hired qualified museum curators to perform the cleaning, at a non-trivial expense. In 2005-6 we had a positive pressure, HEPA filtered redesign of the original system installed. As far as I know, it works effectively: I haven't seen the collection removed for cleaning again.

Minor called our attention to an issue related to library construction. As any visitor to the campus might note, the bell of Hedding College is placed on a pedestal on the Eckley Quadrangle. The bell was given to the University with the 1927 closing of Hedding College, which was a sister Methodist-related college in Abingdon, Illlinois. The main building on the Hedding campus was eventually demolished in 1947. At this time, four large limestone pillars which had been located at the entrance to the building were disassembled and hauled to a farm near Abingdon, where they were rather unceremoniously dumped behind a barn.

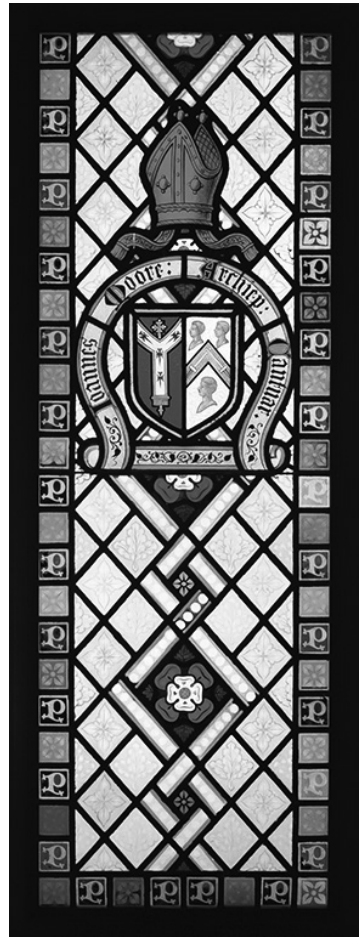
In the midst of construction of The Ames Library, several of us took a trip to Abingdon to look at the pillars. It was decided that with only minor restoration required, they could be reassembled on our campus. Minor's idea was that they should play the main part in a literal "gateway" to the campus at the intersection of Empire and Park Streets, which defines

the southeast corner of the park-like site of The Ames Library. H. Harlan Bloomer, the son of the last chairman of the Hedding College board of trustees, bestowed the gift of the pillars on Illinois Wesleyan, as the final transfer from Hedding to IWU. As the gateway with pillars installed was completed and dedicated in 2000, it is now called the Sesquicentennial Gate in honor of the 150th anniversary of the founding of Illinois Wesleyan University. It was just one more touch of the "gateway" motif that we had been pursuing all along with The Ames Library project.

The Pembroke Windows. Pembroke College, Oxford was established in 1624, twelve years before Harvard came into being in Massachusetts Bay Colony. In 1638 John Harvard willed his library of 400 books and half his estate to the college, which took his name in gratitude for the gift: Minor's library would have endowed the collections of 34 colleges had he been a seventeenth century bibliophile with his library intact. In all honesty Pembroke is one of the lesser Oxford colleges. In 2011 its endowment was estimated at about £55 million, but then, its enrollment was only a slight 364. Over the years and centuries only one graduate reached enough prominence to have a name recognizable on this side of the pond: Sir William Blackstone was a prominent jurist and scholar of the law, and his *Commentaries on the Laws of England (1765-69)* was something of a page turner in the legal profession. (Samuel Johnson, the noted lexicographer who in 1755 published the first comprehensive dictionary of the English language, attended Pembroke but did not graduate.)

I'm not entirely clear of the source of Minor's acquaintance with Pembroke College, but I believe it came about through the Tanaka Memorial Foundation, which established an

ancillary program to enable the students of Technos International School to study in England.[26] Minor investigated the opportunities for an affiliation with Pembroke, and discovered that there was a selective agreement with a set of American colleges and universities for a full year of study abroad at Pembroke. Single-handedly, Minor forged an agreement with Pembroke, and Illinois Wesleyan has been an active participant since 1997.



Minor took advantage of opportunities to visit the Pembroke campus on several occasions—there is evidence that he even dreamed of someday becoming Master of Pembroke College himself, although that dream never bore fruit. During one visit to Pembroke he was led down steps to a dank and musty lumber room below ground level, where he espied a set of dusty, much broken and corroding stained glass windows. He was told that the windows had been a part of the original hall that had been constructed in 1846. Due to fears of German bombs falling on Oxford during World War II, however, they were removed and stored away below ground where they had remained ever since. Eventually new windows were commissioned and installed in the dining hall, so the old ones were of no remaining use to the college.

Not one to be discouraged by the poor condition of anything he found to be of interest, Minor was immediately intrigued by the possible availability of the windows. The Master of Pembroke accommodatingly offered them to Illinois Wesleyan for $50,000. Minor soon found a benefactor, and the windows were ours.

I saw the windows for the first time soon after their arrival in Bloomington. The sixteen panels had all been laid out on the floor of a large room in the old Mennonite Hospital building that the university had recently purchased and was using for storage. Indeed, they were a mess. Many of the panels were shattered or otherwise damaged: over 500 individual pieces of glass had to be replaced.

It was most fortunate that our community is home to a spectacularly talented craftsman, Terry Garbe, of A Touch of Glass in Normal, Illinois. I had just a taste of what would be involved in rebuilding and repairing the windows—during

the 1970s I had designed and constructed a set of windows for my dining room on Fell Avenue, and two decades after that a daughter had taken classes with Garbe at the Touch of Glass studio. I knew he was talented, but these were windows constructed as was the style 150 years before, involving a variety of techniques including acid etching and the creation of designs and motifs on individual pieces of glass, not just cutting out shapes and leading them together.

Further complicating the process, the old glass had aged and its spectral qualities had changed as a product of environmental influences over those many decades. As the pamphlet describing the windows says, "Garbe also formulated a mineralized patina of dirt and an olive green stain to establish authenticity and recreate the dirt and grime that had accumulated on the windows during the Industrial Revolution." The replacement pieces needed to look the age of the original glass, rather than stand out all bright and shiny.

The windows were completed and hung from skylights surrounding the circular Merwin-Bates Reading Room at the top of The Ames Library rotunda, off which is located the Tate Archives and Special Collections. The entire arrangement is spectacular. It still somewhat amazes me that Minor allowed the library staff and construction committee to select the design of the building, determine the finish motif as an updated expression of the turn-of-the-century Arts & Crafts movement, select all the furniture, and even design the building graphics and select a famous quotation inscribed on

the Founders Gate at the Main Street campus entrance—it embellishes the rotunda balcony at the library entrance level.

Minor's eagerness to have the library, to walk within it and to use its collections, did not cause him to flex his presidential muscle to insist on one thing or another throughout the design and construction process. Instead, he placed his trust in those of us on the planning and construction committees. Installation of the Pembroke Windows was an act celebrating the library's completion—but no, that is not quite right. The installation of the bronze statue of Minor, striding over the entrance plaza with books, papers, and a violin in hand, reading glasses slightly down his nose, yes, this reminder to us all of the progenitor of The Ames Library, that was the library's completion. On the stones at his feet is inscribed the phrase, "What's your passion?" Books were his passion, and The Ames Library was the passion of his presidency.

After being immersed in decisions regarding design and finishes, it is quite possible to find oneself adopting various motifs for more personal use. Five or so years after The Ames Library opened, Nancy Cosner and I decided to make some changes at our home on Parkview Drive. The house itself is a pretty ordinary sort of place, built to a floor plan that has been duplicated probably hundreds of times through the subdivisions of Bloomington-Normal, particularly in the period from the mid-1960s into the 1990s when the style seemed to change and everything started getting much larger. The house has a double front door, which makes it great for bringing in new refrigerators and grand pianos, but for most of the time it is just ornamental. Ours had a sort of faux Spanish hacienda wrought iron looking arrangement in

front of the actual doors. We thought it was quite ugly, and wanted to replace it with something else.

We got the idea to have a custom door built for us by an old sailing buddy of mine, Ron Skidmore, of Prairie Woodworks in Downs. I wanted the door to be substantial, to give a solid "Ka-chunk" when it was closed. It was heavily built of walnut, and provided for leaded glass windows in each of the two half-doors. The door hardware was in an Arts & Crafts style, as were the new porch lights just outside. We had an idea that the windows should be made entirely of clear glass but with a variety of textures and surfaces, in a design related to the 1970s work of Ed Carpenter, a glass artist in Portland, Oregon. We went to Terry Garbe to have the glass panels constructed. When we showed him a book that included photographs of the Carpenter designs we had in mind, he immediately recognized Carpenter's work and devised something that totally fulfilled our dreams. The doors were constructed and installed, and to this day we enjoy passing through them every time we enter or exit the house.

The Special Collections reading room in The Ames Library includes a large reading table. Although the reading tables and chairs throughout the library came from Agati Furniture in Chicago, Stroyan wanted something distinctive for the seating in the Special Collections. She proposed the "continuous arm chair" from Thomas Moser, a hand-crafted furniture builder in Freeport, Maine. The chairs are both beautiful and comfortable. We decided to swallow the expense for the taste and elegance they would bring to the reading room.

A few years before our home door replacement project, Nancy and I had discovered that Thomas Moser had an outlet in Chicago, in the 1894 Tree Studios building along

State Street north of Ohio. We were looking for an upgrade to the seating around our informal dining area, where we have 99 percent of our meals. We were immediately attracted to the Newport chair, a design inspired by the original Windsor chair of 200 years before, but with a more contemporary look to it. We ordered four of them and two or three months later a truck from Freeport arrived with our delivery. We had been using the Moser Newport chairs for a few years when we had the new doors built, and took the opportunity to commission Prairie Woodworks to build a new cherry table for us as well as the doors, to replace the Ikea table that Nancy had brought with her from Forest Hills when she moved to Bloomington in 2001.

Thus, between the Moser chairs and the Garbe glass, we absorbed the influences of The Ames Library finishes and now live with it daily. These things do have a way of seeping into one's life. I have experienced such an effect again and again. It is a different way of "collecting" that doesn't require space for 13,000 volumes in the basement.

Chapter 12

The Aftermath

If this is dying, then I don't think much of it.

–Lytton Strachey, on his deathbed

Minor died on July 22, 2003. Around Thanksgiving 2002, he had come down with what he initially thought was a cold: bronchitis, something in his chest. He found he couldn't shake it off in a few days; it persisted. He set his sights on the February Trustees meeting, scheduled for Feb. 11-12, and attended, discharging his usual responsibilities. The meeting was held on the two-year anniversary of the Oakbrook Retreat, and it was in many ways a revisiting of the themes pursued at that gathering.

Board President Craig Hart introduced Minor, who gave his President's Report as an introduction to the agenda for the Board sessions to follow. He had his usual sense of humor, at one point quipping "as most of you know, Jim Ruoti decided many months ago that he was going to retire and become a permanent wallpaper hanger in Florida since he seems to be so good at that . . ."[27] He acknowledged his now unrelenting health problem, "I have never known my colleagues collectively to be in the wheezy, coughy situation that I am myself . . ."

Soon he was preaching the same old sermon to the same old choir: "If we were to be among the very best colleges in the country, those that might define themselves or hope to be second to none, what would for example, ten single traits be that we would like to say put us in that position . . . I would say ZIP code diversity is a goal very much to be achieved . . . we have not tried to be a place that has had practical, vocational

training for anybody locally, we've left that to Community Colleges . . . in my old classic way, I sometimes think that a university or college is a collection of great scholars clustered about a wonderful library like The Ames Library attracting students who want to study there . . ."

Minor then asked Robert Bray of the English Department, who also chaired the faculty Committee on University Programs and Policies, to make further comments. Bray continued Minor's theme with more subtle indirection: "Considered as a corporation, a university's prime objective is to survive . . . but considered as an idea, the university is a place first of all where knowledge is created for its own sake and later for purposes that may or may not have a practical effect in the so-called real world . . . on the idea side the university has perhaps been pulled rather more than it would like to have been pulled in directions not altogether right for the idea . . ." That is, who needs mere survival when you can pursue a great and noble idea?

Between Bray's sublime ideal and Minor's idyll of students clustered around great books and scholars, I can't help but see a shared romantic vision of the past. But when did this perfection of the liberal arts ideal exist? Looking into my customary first source, I found the following description of American colleges c1820: "All the schools were small, with a limited undergraduate curriculum based on the liberal arts. *Students were drilled in Greek, Latin, geometry, ancient history, logic, ethics and rhetoric . . . Originality and creativity were not prized, but exact repetition was rewarded.* The college president typically enforced strict discipline, and the upperclassman enjoyed hazing the freshman . . . Many of their students

were sons of clergymen; most planned professional careers as ministers, lawyers or teachers."

There couldn't have been much love of learning here, nor much of "follow your passion" either. Novels were not texts in any of the courses—"literature" in its modern sense didn't join the liberal arts canon for another half century or so. Indeed, Greek letter literary societies came into existence to support student interest in modern literature because of the absence of such opportunities in the standard classical studies of the college curriculum. And rote memorization is hardly the path to creative thinking. It seems to me that, in higher education at least, looking back is not a reliable guide to the way forward. The world changes, at least some of the time for the better.

More to the point, I didn't hear in either Minor's or Bray's remarks any acknowledgement of the Oakbrook Retreat keynoter David Breneman's advice *not* to pursue either the rankings game, or the "pure liberal arts" ideal but instead to honestly acknowledge our existing institutional character and further develop it in its own uniqueness. Heartland Community College offers curricula in welding and machine operations skills among other things, and I don't think there is any danger of Illinois Wesleyan developing a welding program. But implicitly, Minor was asserting that *anything* smacking of the "practical" can be taught in a two-year open admissions program, thus there is no need to do that here.

We just do the deep stuff, as the eager students gather round the profound exemplars of wisdom in the shadow of our great library. Is the agenda, then, to purge and cleanse the practical, the applied, the career-oriented, where it exists in our faculty and curriculum—business, nursing, elementary education, music performance, theater stagecraft, studio

art? Would that be a sure plan for enrichment and increased success, or a misbegotten scheme to drown in our own enraptured idealism?

"ZIP code diversity" was a phrase introduced at Oakbrook by Trustee Kathy Lewton, and it was pejorative: her point was that we can always find ways to count if all we want is numbers. *Look beyond the numbers, to our actual goals!* "ZIP codes are not place holders for diversity," she said. "*Real* diversity is essential for a learning environment!" In his memory Minor had twisted it entirely around. As I read this transcript and revisited the Board meeting after thirteen years had passed, it was in so many respects an unhappy moment for me.

At the conclusion of the two-day meeting, in his own words Hart expressed the following sentiments that still echo in my mind: "as some of you may know, Minor has not been feeling well lately, and it has taken a special effort for him to get through this Board meeting. Minor, let us all affirm our desire that you go home now, and take care of yourself, and get better before you return to campus." Minor took the first part of the recommendation, but he never returned to campus even though it was mere steps away from his front door.

He saw a local doctor, then went to Mayo Clinic, and within a few weeks it was confirmed that he had lung cancer in an advanced stage. He went into a decline from that point on—in fact there is evidence that he had already known his health was more seriously impaired than his cough had disclosed. He wished not to see anyone. Hart was allowed in the house, but I'm not sure that even Provost McNew got to see him again. I received one letter from him, on letterhead and typed by a secretary, which he had signed and added a few words. His ever-distinctive signature had degenerated to the merest scribble. It was so clear he was

failing. Someone saw him getting into a car, probably on the way to a doctor's appointment. He was gaunt, and bald from the chemotherapy. It did no good. The disease took him far before he was prepared to let go of everything he cherished. He was but sixty years of age.

The Fall issue of the *Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine* was substantially devoted to memorializing Minor's life and legacy. It was among the finest issues then-Editor Tim Obermiller and staff have produced. For many of us, the Commemoration held in the Shirk Center on Aug. 25 was our most significant opportunity to mourn his passing as well as celebrate his life. I among hundreds of others found a seat in the chairs set up on the performance court—attendance was estimated at 2,500.

I had taken a seat by an African American woman whom I quickly recognized to be Debra Burt '75 (now Debra Burt-Frazier). She turned to me and exclaimed, "Dr. Schnaitter! So good to see you!" We further exchanged greetings and I started to try to recover just how I had come to know her. Had she been my student? An advisee? A psychology major? But it didn't seem like she was among our psychology alums. She quickly reminded me of our relationship. She had been a psychology major, and she was having some academic struggles, perhaps with the biology course required of all our majors. We talked about the challenges she was facing and in the conversation she mentioned that she had enjoyed an English course she was taking. I suggested that perhaps she should take some more English; "follow your passion" as it came to be famously put around IWU, and go with it.

She did just that, and graduated with an English major. She had earned a master's degree at Chicago State in 1983, and for her work on the Minority Alumni Network Illinois

Wesleyan had given her its Loyalty Award in 2001. She had begun work on a doctorate in educational administration, which she eventually completed in 2013. It felt good to hear that I had been one of many who had helped her on her journey. It had been 28 years since her Illinois Wesleyan graduation, and we still knew each other on sight.

The Commemoration began with remarks by McNew, who had assumed the acting presidency in April of that year.[28] She was perhaps the most articulate of the speakers who would come to the podium that day. "How could someone so full of vitality, so constantly in motion, be stilled? How could someone whose dynamic personality made him seem a force of nature be drained of life? We must have been in a happy slumber for these past 14 years, dreaming with him that we could make our college a kind of contemporary Camelot, where no one, least of all our leader, sickens and dies an untimely death." She quoted from the poet Theodore Roethke to capture what it was like to be the Provost working for a President like Minor, adjusting a bit on Roethke's lines to better express the sentiment: "He was the sickle, I poor I, the rake. Coming behind him for his pretty sake/But what prodigious mowing we did make."

Minor's sons Joffre and Minor III in turns shared the podium. Joffre led off; "He had a knack for seeing greatness in things, and how those things could become even better. That was what was so attractive for him about IWU: its seemingly unlimited potential. And with a lot of help from others, Dad . . . helped take it places that might have been unthinkable fourteen years prior . . . In many ways, then, Dad provided for us the same thing he did for the University: encouragement, energy, inspiration, and gentle guidance." Minor III, the elder of the two—Joffre had just graduated from Connecticut College and Minor III from Yale Law—followed up with

similar comments. Hart, speaking as President of the Illinois Wesleyan Board of Trustees, concluded the Commemoration comments. He concluded his remarks with the following:

> . . . Minor Myers leaves a great legacy for Illinois Wesleyan and all those who are a part of this institution: A clear challenge to keep Minor's vision alive. We have an inspiration to set lofty goals, to continue to build and to seek to make this University the best it can be.
>
> . . . For Minor, the sky was always the limit. He was not satisfied with being less than the best. And in memorializing him, we should not be satisfied, either. Let us leave here today overjoyed and inspired by the fact that Minor Myers came to us 15 years ago and by the leadership he provided. We must embrace the confidence he gave us, the confidence to set lofty goals, to accept the challenge those goals create—with the same passion, the same enthusiasm that Minor showed us day by day. We should go from this place and build upon the legacy he had given us all. We owe him nothing less.

On July 25, 2003, I had attended the annual grant presentation ceremony of the Tanaka Memorial Foundation, held at the Metropolitan Club in Manhattan. Dr. Kenji Tanaka, Chairman of the Tanaka Foundation, made welcoming remarks to the invited award recipients. Minor would ordinarily have attended himself, but he had died three days earlier. Tanaka concluded his remarks with the following tribute:

> Finally, I wish to honor a close friend and highly respected colleague. We have received the very sad news of the passing of President Minor Myers jr at

Illinois Wesleyan University on Tuesday morning. Dr. Myers was here at the start and it is with him that I first shared my dreams seventeen years ago at Hobart and William Smith Colleges. On that hot summer's evening, I met a kindred spirit. He has remained a treasured supporter and contributor as our international network has grown. Dr. Myers understood so well how we inherit the achievements of the past and, through them, shape our future. We especially admired his scholar's appreciation of Japanese culture, as well as western art and music. He was truly a Renaissance man.

We were delighted when the introduction of Pembroke College in the TMF and Technos family led President Myers to develop an Oxford program at Illinois Wesleyan and eventually to acquire historical stained glass windows for the new library in Bloomington. What a marvelous legacy he hands on.

We truly miss Dr. Myers' presence today, although his spirit lives on in all he inspired. Our thoughts and deepest sympathy are with Ellen Myers and their family as we farewell a special, special friend.

The IWU e-Bulletin Board drew some interesting contributions. In particular, the submission from former President Robert Eckley caught my attention. I think it is fairly well known that Eckley had significant reservations about Minor's leadership. Consequently, the preparation

of an appreciation of Minor's presidency must have been as difficult for him to perform as a tightrope walk. After what must have been long consideration he arrived at the following: "The unfortunate early passing of President Minor Myers jr emphasizes the progress of the University in his 14 year tenure. His leadership and the cooperation and assistance of administrative staff, faculty, trustees, and countless alumni and other constituencies have brought Illinois Wesleyan to an unprecedented position within higher education. The people of the University will always honor his name and his contributions to its development."

I suppose that many readers took this as a fairly plain-spoken tribute. Yet in my reading, as I look for an acknowledgement of some concrete achievement that we all could attribute to Minor—The Ames Library might occur naturally to most of us—the most we get is the somewhat vacuous expression "the progress of the University." In line with the thought that it is the troops who win the wars rather than the generals who nonetheless take the credit, Eckley took the opportunity to laud "administrative staff, faculty, trustees, and countless alumni" for the University's progress. It seemed that even at his death, Eckley was not going to surrender a fulsome paean to the achievements of Minor Myers.

Bray submitted a poem, titled "Tigger." Yes, as you might gather, it was thematically based on the *Winnie the Pooh* character. Bob's poetic conceit was that Minor was a "pouncer" who would land unexpectedly with both feet in

the midst of someone's unsuspecting lassitude. In 33 lines, he developed the theme expressed in the opening verse:

> *That was him every time: he just bounced.*
> *Always astonished at landing on you*
> *But likewise pleased at the prospect of new*
> *adventures, he'd peer and blink and smile*
> *and say let's do something, right now, while*
> *you sat dazed, having been thoroughly trounced.*

Though Bray wrote with an appreciative tone, not every trouncing was equally appreciated. On one occasion, the Dean of Admission had been quite vocal about his dissatisfaction with the School of Art's approach to prospective art majors. Minor promised he would personally take charge of turning this situation around. He devised his own plan, which involved individual contacts with all the art teachers in Illinois high schools and provision of promotional material. The President's Office hired two student workers at twenty hours a week to work on this and like projects. These students reported to Minor rather than to the Director of the School of Art. I ran into the Director (Miles Bair) after this project had been launched and asked him how he was dealing with the new Presidential oversight of his program. Miles shrugged, and said with a measure of stoicism, "This too will pass." And it did.

Sometime after Minor's death and the memorial service held at the Shirk Center and Ellen's move back to Connecticut, the Executive Assistant to the President Susan Bassi asked me to come by her office. She told me Ellen had consigned a variety of Minor's things with the Asahel Gridley Antiques

shop on Front Street in downtown Bloomington. Bassi asked me to pay a visit to the shop and look over Minor's items and recommend anything I thought the University should purchase and preserve.

I made such a visit within a day or two. A variety of Minor's things were on display, some of which I recognized and some not. There was a group of tiny cast-lead figurines—I couldn't tell if they were antiques or modern reproductions—of a marching band, possibly British military, holding a variety of instruments characteristic of the nineteenth century: over-the-shoulder saxhorns and such. This set, which made me think of the lead soldiers that youngsters once played with as toys, Minor kept in a display case in his Holmes Hall office. There was a small porcelain bust of John Wesley that had also been in his office. I made a note to tell Susan about the bust: the namesake of the University, which Minor had collected while at Wesleyan, would be a worthy objet d'art regardless of who occupied the President's office.

Something else caught my eye. Hanging over the partly open door of an old wardrobe hung a handful of ties. These were Minor's neckwear. Two things jumped to mind. When he was new to Wesleyan and ran into the deep politically and culturally conservative roots of this part of the country, Minor stirred up a certain amount of controversy. Was he a genius, brilliant conversationalist, and visionary leading a new era in the life of Illinois Wesleyan University, or was he an East-coast snob, arrogant and condescending? One heard murmurs about town leaning in both directions.

At one of the holiday open houses at the President's house, I observed an interaction of the sort that gave rise to the later opinion. In the midst of some random chit-chat, Minor addressed a gentleman of considerable years and no doubt a

certain stature within the local community with an inquiry. To paraphrase his remark as best I can, Minor said, "That regimental tie you're wearing, can you tell me the battalion; it slips my mind right now." In Central Illinois, such an inquiry won't generate a ready "First Queen's Dragoon Guards" or whatever. If you would get anything at all beyond a dumbfounded look, it would more likely be "Oh, its just something my wife picked up for me at K-Mart." Such forays into casual conversation were the likely source of the part of Minor's reputation that alleged snobbishness.

I suppose Minor had his share of regimental ties: they are easy enough to buy online these days. But it wasn't a regimental tie that caught my attention at Asahel Gridley that day. It was a tie that Minor had worn often—too often, some might say. It was one of the ties that he would sometimes wear for a week straight through, as if he slept in his clothes at night and never changed a thing. This tie was designed with a repeating motif down the diagonals, but instead of regimental stripes or the seal of his alma mater this tie was decorated with rows of tiny leaping lambs. I can't imagine that Minor would have bought it for himself; perhaps it was a birthday present from Ellen or the boys at some time or other.

I doubt there was ever a Cabinet meeting during which Minor did not take a moment to polish his reading glasses. Most people would take out a handkerchief for this task, or a tissue, but Minor always used his necktie. Never in my life have I observed any other person clean his glasses with his tie. I asked the proprietor of the store for a price on this tie, and he told me just to take it. So now I have it, tucked away

somewhere out of sight. But I've never worn it, and doubt I ever will.

Which leads me to my final comment. One day a half-dozen years into Minor's presidency, Carl Teichman came into my office and closed the door. He said Minor had been bothered by a comment in one of the evaluations from his on-campus interview leading up to the presidency being offered to him. These evaluations are normally kept in confidence, but someone on the Search Committee had spilled the beans with Minor.

One relatively brief critique began as follows. "Meyers makes a good first impression. His brash Ivy sophistication and intellectual savoir faire create just the image many at Wesleyan think we need in the presidency . . . [but] beyond the alluring personal presence, Meyers is to me quite an enigma. I don't have much of a clue as to what kind of executive officer he would make. I would feel more comfortable hiring a president based on proven administrative ability than on image and promise." Teichman with a bit of indirection was asking me if I knew the source of those remarks that apparently had been rankling Minor ever since. I told him I knew nothing about it. But of course I did know who had written them. It was me.

As President, Minor remains something of an enigma to me. At one time I made this note in a private file: "MM is a hobbyist. For him, he treats IWU as a hobby." Well, there is a certain truth to that. Minor would probably object to calling his bibliomania a "hobby.'" It was a passion. He pursued it more or less relentlessly. It was close to an obsession. One might fairly say that he pursued his commitment to Illinois

Wesleyan with similar passion. Of his book mania, he said "If I see anything eighteenth century, I have to have it."

Regarding Illinois Wesleyan, he might have said, "If I see any opening for building on the University's quality and reputation, I have to pursue it." It's hard to fault that quality in a college president. There are some risks involved, following a passion rather than pursuing a specific and detailed plan for the future, like the five-year objectives that Eckley established for each half-decade. Following a passion can lead to a measure of caprice, to accidents both happy and unfortunate. Slogging up a mountain toward its summit with a steadfast determination may get one to the top, but one is likely to miss the rare butterfly fluttering over an alpine meadow along the way. In pursuing some rare butterflies on his ascent Minor stepped into a few boggy spots, it is true, but it would be hard to argue that he failed in building the University's quality and reputation. The world needs its visionaries, its poets. They are too few among us. Let us cherish those we have.

Chapter 13

The Collection Changes Hands

This is no library. This is the Batcave.

Robin Sloan, Mr. Penumbra's 24-hour Bookstore

In early November 2003, for the first time in a year or more, I visited the President's house at 1201 Park Street. The visit was made with Acting President Janet McNew and University Librarian Sue Stroyan. Ellen Myers had moved to her new home in Connecticut a week or so earlier, and I had seen the moving van in front of the house loading her furniture and belongings. The house was empty, except for the books. As we entered, we briefly looked in the living room, where the built-in shelves on the west wall were still lined with old and mostly leather-bound volumes. But this was not the heart of Minor's collection. That would be found in the basement.

I had never been in the basement of the President's house before. The Myerses were only the third occupants of the house that had been built to the Eckleys' specifications some thirty-five years earlier. Though I had visited the house many times before, my acquaintance didn't extend beyond the main floor and thus I didn't know what to expect at the bottom of the stairs. As we descended, a fireplace came into view; it appeared once to have been a family room, perhaps an informal place for watching television. But to either side and filling up all but the central area directly in front of the fireplace, we saw nothing but books. Books beyond any reasonable expectation, thousands of books. Perhaps I had something of the reaction of Howard Carter on first peering into King Tut's tomb, who when asked if he saw anything

inside murmured in utter, stunned amazement, "Yes, beautiful things." What I saw wasn't quite up to the funerary treasures of Tut's tomb, but amazing nonetheless.

Minor appeared to have fabricated the shelving himself—clearly it had not been built by the craftsmen of the Wesleyan Physical Plant whose workmanship would have far exceeded the utilitarian quality of the construction. There were two-by-fours as vertical supports for unfinished board shelving, from floor all the way to the ceiling. And the shelves were so close together that there was barely room to enter these aisles to gain access to the books.

Possibly some of the shelving held not only the books whose bindings faced the aisles, but rows of books behind the books. To one side stood a small worktable, where one presumed that Minor sat and pored over the volumes of current interest as he sought out corroboration for his latest thoughts and ideas, searching wherever his most urgent queries might lead him.

Nothing was sacrificed for comfort or leisurely ambiance. With its cramped shelving having taken possession of the space, it was not an inviting room. Its purpose had devolved into nothing but support of the ever-expanding collection. It bordered on the refuge of a hoarder, a bibliographic hoarder, insatiably hungry for every volume he could lay his hands on. Nothing was in disarray, however; all the books were neatly shelved. There were no piles or stacks of materials spread about. No, Minor wasn't a classic hoarder, not remotely in the tradition of the Collyer brothers or Thomas Jefferson

Fitzpatrick with his thirteen rooms of books piled about in utter disarray.

Indeed, whenever I had visited for an open house or other Presidential event the house upstairs had always been neat as a pin and rather austere in its formality. Rather than a hoarder's nightmare, in the basement we had stumbled into Minor's private refuge, his own version of a man-cave, where he could be himself and indulge his passion with complete concentration. In its own way it was his well-kept secret.

We went into a second room and discovered it also to be completely full of shelving and books. Yet a third room, probably the laundry, seemed not to have been converted to book storage. I conjectured that it had been the place where he had kept his model train setup. Whatever had been there was gone, the only books I recall being the complete eleventh edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica from 1911, an edition that in the words of one commentary was a "landmark" for its "scholarship and literary style". Not quite up to the stature of Diderot's *Encyclopédie* from the mid-eighteenth century, but useful enough that even my father had owned a set.

As we finished our look-see, it had become clear to us that the books couldn't remain here. We were planning a substantial renovation of the private family quarters on the second floor, and the new and yet unnamed next president would no doubt specify further work. Developing a catalog of the collection—we already owned it at the time of this visit—couldn't possibly be pursued in this cramped and dimly lit space. The three of us agreed the collection needed

to be moved to Sheean Library for this organizational effort, out of the Batcave and into the light.

Ellen had known from the time when Minor's death became inevitable that she would have to vacate the place that had been her home for fourteen years. The President's house was owned by the University, and occupancy by the President and family was a cost-free benefit. Ellen had raised her two boys there, and seen them off to college. She knew she would have to leave, and the University would probably encourage promptness.

As it turned out, the time between Minor's death on July 22 and her departure was just a little over three months. In that time she would have to find new accommodations and arrange to move her belongings to her new home. And she would need to do something to dispose of Minor's library. She anticipated some type of agreement with the University, and hired a lawyer to represent her interests. As gently as it might have been expressed, the University needed her to leave.

Ellen found a place to live in Mystic, Connecticut, near Stonington and Long Island Sound, in New London County where Connecticut College is located, where she met Minor in the early 1970s when she was a student there, where she and Minor lived until in 1984 they moved to Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva New York, and where her sons Minor III and Joffre both attended college. She had many attachments to the area. The problem of disposing of the books was not so easy.

The decision to purchase the library collection, the appraisal of its value, and the agreement on what the University would

pay the estate for whatever part of the collection they would purchase had been managed by Craig Hart, President of the Board of Trustees, Janet McNew, Acting President of the University since spring 2003, and Mark Dunn, University Attorney. I assume that there had been a contract of some sort, a sales agreement, but I never saw it. I was eased in to involvement essentially after everything in the basic negotiation had been settled. My role was to oversee disposal of the collection. I have considerable documentary support for what happened in that process, but concerning the initial passage of the collection from Minor to IWU I can only give my impressions of what happened. Later, I can affirm that my account is what did happen.

To begin with, as far as I could tell Ellen had no desire to retain Minor's library. Before Minor's death, Stroyan had written a proposal for the Myerses to review, detailing a plan whereby the IWU library staff would assist the family in disposing of the collection. This document had been prepared in June 2003, and appears never to have been formally implemented. My reading is that it assumed the majority if not the entire collection was to be sold off. Because of the date it seems to have been discussed with Minor's knowledge and possibly his full participation. The idea of selling the collection was not something that came up only after Minor's death. Furthermore, the immense collection of books was Minor's passion, not Ellen's. Even if she had considered it, moving the collection to New England would cost a great deal of money, and she would need to acquire a much larger new home were it to contain all the books.

Ellen had made contact with a music specialist, J & J Lubrano Music Antiquarians of Syosset, New York, with whom she would deal directly in disposing of Minor's library

of early music. Thus, the early music holdings were not part of the collection to be acquired by Illinois Wesleyan. The early music collection was shelved at the east side of the living room in the President's house, beyond the place where the harpsichord had rested—once there was a harp placed along side it from the same era, but one night the house was broken into and the harp, along with just a few other items, was taken.

As long as the shelving was not disturbed, the music collection—all seeming to be bound in leather, many entire shelves in folio—occupied a determinate physical location. Such could not be said for anything else in the collection. Lists maintained on obsolete word processing software, which were segmented into topic areas, and were revised periodically, were the only organizing device, and the lists were not coordinated with physical locations in the collection. Perhaps Minor just knew where things were. But there was no precise record. Nothing about the collection was precise.

As far as I know, the early music collection was the only carve-out from the totality of the collection that was identified in the agreement between Ellen and IWU. That was the part that she would ship to J & J Lubrano whom she had already contacted. Minor appears to have purchased many of the works in the music collection from the Lubranos. Wesleyan was to have nothing to do with the music collection. It is my interpretation that the Wesleyan group worked on the assumption that everything except the music was coming our way. There is some ambiguity at this point, however, as Stroyan says that she saw an agreement that she believed granted permission for the estate to retain some part of the

collection. That document is not available to me, and thus I have no way to corroborate Stroyan's recollection.

Before Illinois Wesleyan could negotiate a price with Ellen, a valuation on the collection had to be mutually agreed upon. An appraisal to serve as an estimate for the value of the total collection was conducted by Tom Joyce of Thomas J. Joyce and Company, rare bookseller and appraiser in Chicago. Minor had had previous dealings with Joyce, and that is how his services became known to IWU. The University paid Joyce $10,799.35 for his appraisal.

Quoting from a Stroyan memo to me dated Sept. 10, 2004: "Tom Joyce . . . assessed 2,911 volumes in fall 2003 and estimated the value of 938 of the volumes at $106,150 with individual volumes ranging from $5 to $1,700." In a letter from Joyce to Dunn, dated Sept. 27, 2003, which appears to be a final appraisal, I can find nothing at $106,150, or any subset of evaluations totaling that number. I simply don't know what number Stroyan was reporting. But similarly, I do not know how Joyce arrived at his total appraised value. He did not look at and appraise some 13,000 volumes. It appears that at most he looked 2,911 volumes, perhaps appraising only 938 of them. But if that was his method, how did he select the ones to appraise? And how did he build a collection value from it?

I have one list from Joyce that enumerates 83 volumes. Each has an index number, and the first page of Joyce's list goes: 3941, 3865, 3897, 3945, 3940, 3928, 3894, 3919, 3880, 3881, 3913, etc. In other words, a sampling, with some apparent movement back and forth among what might have been an indexing system devised by Minor. It is all quite confusing. Of the volumes listed among the 83, the highest value is

for John Wilkins, *An Essay towards a Real Character, and a Philosophical Language*, 1668, with a typed-in value of $1,500 and then, penciled in, $4,000-$6,500.[29] The typescript seems to be Joyce's, not Minor's, as the header is JOYCE AND COMPANY; but which value did Joyce use in appraising the collection? And what became of the values of the roughly 10,000 volumes not included in the 2,911 volumes he might have surveyed? I must say that I have no understanding of how Joyce arrived at an appraised value for the total collection at $344,786. I obtained copies of key pieces of the correspondence between Joyce and Dunn only after the collection had been purchased, however, and by that time the issue was moot anyway.

For reasons unknown to me, a second appraisal was performed by Carol Struck of About Books on Front Street in Bloomington. The Struck appraisal seems to have been arranged and paid for by Ellen, not by Illinois Wesleyan. The appraisal was made of 102 specially selected books on a typed list, with nine additional titles penciled in below the initial 102. I know from personal knowledge that many if not all of these books were located in the west shelves in the living room at 1201 Park Street, not in the basement where the bulk of the collection was located. Minor had once taken some of these books from their shelves and showed them to me.

Struck was unable to determine values for 23 of the items among the original 102. However, values were provided for all of the additional nine items. Thus, with values on 88 items, the appraised value of $64,555 amounted to $734 per appraised volume. The most valuable item was Cotton Mather's *An Ecclesiastical History of New England*, 1702, valued at $11,400. Struck's appraisal was dated Oct. 22, 2003. I am not clear when this appraisal was made available

to Illinois Wesleyan, and whether it was before or after an agreement was reached on the IWU collection purchase. The purpose of this second appraisal was never made clear to me, although I have an idea about it.

Some of the outside observers of this whole process were disturbed that IWU sold off the majority of the collection. But in the agreement with the Myers estate there was no expectation that IWU was going to retain Minor's collection, either in whole or in part. McNew began testing the waters for a scheme where we would retain a part of the collection that would appear to have value to The Ames Library, which would be a relatively small part of the collection, but it was always intended that we would dispose of the bulk of it.

It was never proposed by either side that Illinois Wesleyan would or should attempt to preserve the collection as a memorial to Minor. IWU was simply trying to be accommodating in helping Ellen dispose of a very large and weighty, troublesome accumulation of disparate bibliographic materials, much of which was in a deteriorated condition.

Finally, on Oct. 28, 2003, IWU purchased Minor's book collection for $253,901. The number was taken from Tom Joyce's collection appraisal of $344,786 with $90,885 subtracted for music.

Those are the facts as I know them. What we had was a collection of books whose number we didn't know and whose value we didn't know, and the identity of which, item by item, we didn't know. Of course we had many pieces of all this information, but we didn't really have much of a grip on what we now owned. All we knew for sure was, we had paid almost a quarter million dollars for it. Country folk

have an idiom for this kind of a purchase. The IWU parties to this negotiation and purchase had a general idea that we had something of greater value than what we had paid for it. As time passed, in my estimation that assumption became less and less tenable, until the eventual auction of these materials brought us face to face with a grim reality. To that story we now turn.

Chapter 14

The Auction

for a collector . . . ownership is the most intimate relationship that one can have to objects. Not that they come alive in him; it is he who lives in them.

Walter Benjamin, Illuminations

According to a recent *New York Times* article,[30] Fabrice Grinda is a French entrepreneur who made $100 million before he reached forty. One day he had a moment of truth. He sold his estate in Bedford, New York, and his $300,000 McLaren sports car, and in fact everything else he owned. For the last three years, he has been living out of a suitcase that contains fifty items: ten pair of socks, two pair of jeans, etc. He no longer owns a home. He lives in hotels. Fifty items. It's all he owns. Other than his $100 million, of course.

Mahatma Gandhi is said to have owned just twelve things when he died: a pair of eyeglasses, two pair of sandals, a pocket watch, and a few other things. Some people tend toward the austere. Minor had over 13,000 books. Until he became ill, he was adding to his library with a passion. He was not a "gotta simplify my life" kind of guy. I wish he had been; that would have helped simplify mine.

Just as Janet McNew had appointed me to take hold of the new library project, she again asked me to take charge of the plan to auction Minor's books. This kind of thing had happened both before and since in my administrative career. For example, several years ago then-President Dick Wilson asked me to step into management of the installation of artificial turf on the football field. By the time I received this assignment, Mike Wagner was already deeply involved in this work. It wasn't fair to wrest the responsibility away

from him. Consequently my main job was to serve as the liaison between the athletic department and Holmes Hall. Wilson wanted to get his progress reports from someone in the administration rather than the coaches.

It isn't that I didn't do anything else: I convened several meetings of coaches and the Athletic Director where decisions were made, where probably most satisfying among my influences on the project was nixing the idea being advocated by some to have Tommy Titan's image emblazoned 10 yards high and wide in the center of the playing field. In a related sense, I made some of the decisions regarding the auction, but a lot of what I did was serve as a link between McNew's office and Sue Stroyan, who did the major work of planning for the auction.

McNew was exploring various schemes whereby significant portions of Minor's collection could be preserved in The Ames Library for the benefit of the academic program. Although it was never explicit, I inferred that Craig Hart's primary goal was to recover the $253,901 that he had approved for purchase of the collection, without attention to anything reserved for the Illinois Wesleyan collections.

One idea McNew proposed, an idea that never made it into a written proposal as far as I know but that I wrote in my undated notes from a meeting with her, went like this: "It would be ideal if we could sell 70 percent of the collection and make back what we paid for the whole collection plus labor. Then we would have 30 percent to retain as the Minor Myers Collection." By this time, we had already moved the collection from 1201 Park Street to the vacated Sheean Library; we had also incurred the expense of moving it ($4,800) as well as Tom Joyce's appraisal fee ($10,799). We were committing ourselves to hiring Meg Miner—this was prior to her permanent appointment as Archivist, replacing

Anke Voss—on an adjunct basis to make a detailed inventory of the collection at an expected cost of as much as $30,000.

Thus, we anticipated our total investment in the collection at $300,000 or more. Then, at auction, we would probably need to provide the auctioneer a commission set at 20 percent of sales. Thus, McNew's proposal was that we needed to expect total sales receipts from the auction of $360,000 from 70 percent of the collection. That would imply that the collection in total would have an auction value in the area of half a million dollars. This seemed quite unlikely to me. The Joyce appraisal was for half that. Was the appraisal that far off, or would bidders on average bid at twice the appraised value? Neither seemed likely.

My mood changed to bleak and fatalistic. Late one afternoon, alone, I visited the house at 1201 Park Street. Ellen had moved out and her belongings, furniture, art objects, things she collected herself like Nantucket baskets and Quimper plates, all of it was gone. The books were gone. The house was empty.

I went down the basement stairs. The amateur carpentry of Minor's book shelving stood bare and forlorn. There were a few small items on the mantle over the fireplace in what had once been a family room before it had become a makeshift library. Something that may have been a laundry room was also empty, but under a sink there was some railroadiana, some printed minutes of annual meetings of Connecticut churches from 1805 and after, a box of brass buttons.

I thought of some of the ephemera Minor had given me: when he found I was collecting Evelyn Nesbit along with Maud Allan, he passed on the sheet music to "Sprinkle Me with Kisses" by Earl Carroll and Ernest R. Ball, from 1915 with Nesbit pictured on the cover. Another time, remembering our shared birth year, he gave me a sheet of 1942 Christmas

stamps from the National Society for Crippled Children; in grade school each year we brought our pennies and nickels and dimes to deposit in a can with a slot in the top to make a class contribution to that charity. Minor apparently had the same experience growing up in Ohio. The scattered remains left in the basement reminded me of those simple gifts.

I picked up some of the leftovers and put them in my shoulder bag; I don't know why, I didn't particularly want any of it. It seemed to be a feeble attempt to claim a last bit of Minor as my own; to *salvage* some last pieces of his life. I may have wandered around the empty house for an hour. I left the place to the cleaners who would be coming shortly to dispose of whatever remained, and for the process of reconditioning the house for the next Presidential family to move in.

The first thing that we needed to accomplish was to get an accurate count of the collection. In the earliest preliminary proposal on disposing of the collection, prepared by Sue Stroyan with Ellen Myers' approval, Stroyan stated: "The Ames Library staff and faculty wish to assist the Myers family in the disbursal of their over 5000 volumes book collection."[31] On December 3, 2003, Stroyan estimated the collection at 12,170. In this memo, she did not identify her count procedure. Stroyan produced another estimate based on measuring the number of feet of shelf space the collection took, and then multiplying this by an average number of volumes per foot. In a memo to me dated September 10, 2004, she said "we can more confidently say that this collection contains approximately 9500 volumes (assuming 30 volumes per shelf) that are 959 feet."

I didn't follow her reasoning here, but took her word. Not counted were 58 feet of "non-rare" materials including a variety of old phone books, *National Geographic* magazines and other periodicals, auction and sales catalogs, and so forth.

Only a partial set of the 111 volumes in the About Books appraisal had been found among our volumes. It appeared that we would need to decrease the apparent value of the collection from $253,901 to an amount yet to be determined. We were moving in the wrong direction to achieve McNew's plan to retain 30 percent of the collection while covering costs from sale of the other 70 percent.

On November 19, 2004, Stroyan's estimate had returned about to where she had started, in December 2003, at 13,500 volumes. On February 2, 2005, I e-mailed McNew with the precise volume count set at 13,531. This was the final count. At this time on the advice of Anke Voss, University Archivist, I recommended to McNew that we sell 10,093 volumes (74.6 percent of the collection), retain 2,479 volumes (18.3 percent of the collection)[32], and discard 959 volumes (7.1 percent).

Voss had recommended retaining volumes based on subject matter classifications, not cherry-picking the collection for value regardless of where it fell. Subjects deemed appropriate for The Ames Library included (a) "books on books" and collecting (an important foundation for an archival collection); (b) college and university publications (adding to the initial collection that Minor had donated to the University in 1995); (c) local history (for obvious reasons of affinity); (d) drama (relevant to the program in Theatre Arts); (e) Americana and American history; (f) sciences; (g) domestic science/conduct of life/socializing (a particular strength of the collection, including 182 volumes of interest to Women's Studies among other fields). In other words, we recommended retention of those portions of the collection that could most plausibly be put to use by faculty and

students for research purposes. Volumes kept for the Tate Archives were eventually reduced to 1,309.

Ultimately, 11,914 volumes were indexed and included in the auction. Adding to this the 1,309 volumes headed for the Tate Archives, the total came to 13,223, or 308 short of the 13,531 count. These 308 volumes were likely to have been those volumes treated as discards. The last lots in the auction consisted of 17 un-itemized boxed lots, mostly of Sotheby's and other auction catalogs. Presumably most of the 308 items ended up in these boxes. Miner reports that only a handful of items were literally discarded.

The subject matter identification was one of the key elements in the inventory conducted by Miner. Using standard classification categories for bibliographic work, she produced a five page spreadsheet of subjects and counts. Collection categories which contained at least 200 volumes included the following:

Art and Architecture	381
Biography, American	285
Biography, British	243
Collectibles	229
Drama (mostly scripts)	229
Education	284
Fiction	427
Gardening/Hort/Ag	300
Government & Laws	236
History, American	696
History, British	357
Music	351
Numismatics	231
Philosophy (inc. Religion)	723
Poetry	304
Railroads	305

Recipes	1,049
Society of Cincinnati	247
Touring	417
Works (?)	321

There were many times this number of entries ranging from a single entry (e.g., Almanacs, India) to 199 volumes. Although we had the data, I don't believe that a breakdown of the collection by century had ever been determined. This is of some interest, as Minor always claimed that his main collecting interest was the eighteenth century. Yet it seemed unlikely that the majority of the collection dated from that time.

As I recently worked through archival material, I asked Meg Miner if she had data that could generate this information without too much work. She quickly sent me a database of 11,914 volumes that she had cataloged in the collection—things that were ultimately discarded, such as auction catalogs, were not included in the database. The database was organized in an alpha list by author, but it took only moments to re-sort by date. By century, then, the totals were as follows:

15th century	1 [33]	
16th century	82	0.6%
17th century	270	2%
18th century	***2,393***	***20%***
19th century	2,417	20%
20th century +	6,747	57%

Thus, Minor's special passion was represented by only 20 percent—one in five—of the volumes in the collection.

Minor had kept lists of some of these topics. According to Mark Dunn,[34] "An inventory is an itemized list of the goods or stock of a business or collection that is supposed to reflect

what is actually on hand at the time of the inventory. To the best of my knowledge, the lists that Minor created were nothing more than that, i.e. lists. There was no way of knowing whether the lists actually reflected what was on hand at a particular time—even at the time they were prepared. Please remember that deciding when the lists were 'prepared' is by itself problematic because they seem to have been added to and subtracted from over a long period of time at the whim of Minor. There is no way to confirm that Minor's lists were ever intended to reflect what he actually had on hand at any given time. Some of the lists seemed to reflect the items that Minor thought were important (or at least worthy of writing down) at the time the various lists were started, added to, or set aside. In no sense were those lists ever compared by any outside person to what was actually on hand. Minor bought and sold items constantly and he apparently did not feel any need to change or amend his various lists as he bought and sold items." Dunn seemed to be expressing a degree of frustration with Minor's lists, and the way some of us were making use of them as if they were of certified accuracy and reliability. They were, ultimately, just lists and not a master catalog.

I am in possession of copies of three of Minor's lists: "Early Garden Books;" "Cookbooks and Social Usage/Early Books on Food/ together with books on social usage, proper language, and beauty;" and "Roster of Early Music." The music list is dated May 28, 1999; the other two are undated. Two copies of Thomas Mawe's *Every Man his Own Gardener*, which I mention again in a few pages, are listed, and penciled in is the notation, "Alibris, $750." *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy* by Hannah Glasse is included three times for different editions in the list of cookbooks.

By spring 2005 the final inventory was in good shape, and we were considering how to conduct a sale. We considered

consigning the collection to one or more antiquarian booksellers, but clearly there was much in the collection that would not be of interest. Sotheby's was only interested in items with appraised values of $1,000 and up, which would eliminate all but a small percentage of the collection. We couldn't conduct an auction selling individual books as lots: after all, with over 13,000 items, such an auction would take weeks.[35]

I learned that auctions of antiquarian materials were most often sold in "shelf lots," of sixteen to twenty-four volumes, each lot "seeded" with one or more attractive items, leading bidders to take the items of lesser interest to get to the desirable material. We opted for an on-site auction, with Steve Struck of About Books as auctioneer, and the collection divided among 592 lots. A number of lots were single items, but the great majority included multiple volumes, some as many as sixty (e.g., Lot 23, "Alcohol/Spirits volumes including Thomas's How to Mix Drinks (1862?) Estimate: $180," which actually sold for $700)

The auction was held in Sheean Library, Saturday September 17, 2005. It lasted most of the day. In my final reconnoiter of the collection prior to the auction I had noticed that Lot 174 was listed as "16 Volumes including Hawks' Narrative of the Expedition to the China Seas and Japan (under Perry's command). Vol. I & II, 1856. Auction estimate: $625." The Hawks volumes caught my interest, as my son Paul was taking a break from his legal career to refresh his Japanese language skills through a program offered by the Blakemore Foundation. In fact, he ended up remaining in Japan, marrying a woman from Tokyo, and lives there still

with wife and two daughters. I thought the Hawks volumes might make a good birthday gift.

I visited the shelf location for Lot 174, and noted that there were several old books of one sort or another, which did not interest me in particular, except for a rather massive volume that appeared to have been published in the sixteenth century. It was written in Latin, or possibly German, I really didn't pay enough attention to decide. It looked valuable, however, and I thought that the majority of the lot estimate might have been due to that volume, although only the Hawks set was identified in the description.

Slightly outside the gathering of 100 registered bidders, curious faculty, and simple onlookers, I sat by myself in the front row. Having become acquainted with Steve Struck previously as we settled on the various conditions to prevail at the auction, I felt he would recognize me if I raised my bid card for certain items. When Lot 174 came along, I raised my card straight and high, but Struck's attention had already been captured by some bidders in the back of the room. I began to wave my bid card with vigor, but he was entirely under the spell of these backbench bidders. The bidding quickly passed $1,000 and with that I surrendered, beaten without ever having gotten into the fray. The lot eventually sold for $3,300, the highest priced lot in the auction. I guessed I knew how to pick them, though it turned out I didn't really understand what I had picked.

The auction, however, fell well short of our hope, which was to "break even," in the sense of covering the total cost of the collection, its move from 1201 Park to Sheean, Miner's salary, and Joyce's appraisal fee. These costs added up to $292,310. On the expense side of the ledger, we had acquired

a collection of 13,531 titles. We had harvested 1,309 of these for The Ames Library, about 10 percent of the collection.

On the income side, we sold the remaining 90 percent (not counting the discards) for $92,108 net.[36] Thus, we had lost $200,202 on the arrangement, a 68 percent loss. If we had expected to receive all the volumes among the About Books and Tom Joyce appraisals that could not be located, then their aggregate value should be considered a contributor to the loss. I will never do another auction like this, but I think I learned some things in the process. We didn't charge a buyer's premium, which might have added 10 percent to the gross. With that adjustment we would still have lost $190,000, hardly making a dent in our loss problem. I think I learned something further from Lot #174 which I will next address. We could have done the thing better.

The mystery of Lot 174. I've long been annoyed by my thwarted bid attempt regarding Lot 174. It would have been nice to have been recognized for at least one bid, though I can't complain of the outcome, because in any event I wasn't going to compete for a bid that went to $3,300. Writing these reflections renewed my interest, and I undertook to find out just what was included in Lot 174, and what the market value of it all might have been. I e-mailed Meg Miner and asked her if she could send me the detail listing on Lot 174. I thought all of that information might have been lost or erased from computer files, and at least would take a long time to retrieve. I was most pleased to hear back from her

in just a few days; she had attached the detail listing to her reply, and at last I could review the totality of the lot.

In addition to the Francis Hawks volumes on Admiral Perry's visit to Japan, I had a recollection of only one other volume in the lot. It was a large leather-bound volume of many pages which I could not understand as it was printed in Latin. I had the idea that that volume was the driver on the bidding for the lot. It was very old; I discovered in Miner's detail that it was printed in Basel in 1571. When looking for out-of-print books I invariably turn to BookFinder, a meta-search tool that claims it can search in just moments a million and a half volumes in the inventories of a large number of antiquarian booksellers.

There were 16 volumes in Lot 174, and the first was the 1571 volume, which turned out to be from the writings of Gregory of Nazianzus, a major patristic theologian of the fourth century, the archbishop of Constantinople, and a saint in both the eastern and western Christian traditions. He is known and still studied today largely for his writings on the Trinity and the Holy Spirit. The full citation is Gregory of Nazianzus, *Operum Gregorii Nazianzeni tomi tres, aucti nunc primùm Caesarii, qui frater Nazianzeni fuit, Eliae Cretensis episcopi, Pselli, et ipsius Gregorii librorum aliquot accessione*. Although BookFinder listed twenty or more works of Gregory, this one wasn't among them. That indicated rarity. I moved on through the remainder of the lot list, with generally favorable results. My main goal was to get a sense

of values on the lot, and so I jotted these down. The results were as follows—

• Gregory of Nazianzus *Operum Gregorii Zanianzeni tomi tres*	(1571)	no info
• John Wilkins *Essay towards a real character*, etc	(1668)	$4,505
• Richard Blackmore *Eliza. An Epick Poem*	(1705)	$761
• John Arbuthnot *Tables of Ancient Coins, Weights*, etc	(1727)	$748
• Vicento Trissino *Tutte le opera di Giovan Giorgio, primo*	(1729)	$165
• Vicento Trissino *Tutte le opera di Giovan Giorgio, secondo*	(1729)	$165
• Xenophon *History of the Affairs of Greece*	(1770)	$555
• Edmund Ludlow *Memoirs of Edmund Ludlow*	(1771)	$355
• (unidentified) *Plans de terres, pres, Bois et maisons* etc	(1780)	no info
• George Vertue *Medals, Coins, Great Seals*	(1780)	$697
• Comte de Cagliostro *Memoir pour le comte de Cagliostro* etc.	(1786)	$275
• Napoleon?] *Medallic history of Napoleon*	(1819)	no info
• F. de Saulcy *Analyse grammaticale du texte demotique*	(1845)	no info
• Francis Hawks *Japan (Vol. 1 and 2)*	(1856)	$504
• George Jones *Observations on the Zodiacal light*	(1856)	$43

The values that I was able to obtain totaled $8,773 for twelve volumes. I was surprised to find that many of these books are available in current printings. This is true for the three numismatic and medallic arts volumes, for example. The *Plan de terre* volume was a one-of-a-kind watercolor sketchbook depicting plan views of various French gardens of the eighteenth century. Because of its uniqueness there was no way to get a clear estimate on that volume. Some titles had multiple BookFinder listings; where this was so, I used the lowest figure. In some cases, the difference between high and low was substantial; for instance, the highest price for the Hawks *Japan* set was $2,454. Minor's penchant for seeking out the cheapest things he could find regardless of condition led me to this decision.

The question I was trying to answer was, how far off the market appraisal for this sample set of volumes was the actual price realized at the auction? Based on only 75 percent of the volumes in Lot 174, the auction realized just 38 percent of the current market asking price for these materials. It should be emphasized that here I am comparing our 2005 prices realized at auction with 2016 prices asked at retail. At least some of the difference is no doubt due to the changing market and a general increase in the prices of collectibles of all sorts.

I was especially curious about what further investigation of the Gregory of Nazianzus volume would show. It was the oldest among these books, and it was written by a well-known historical figure. I thought it might be worth a handsome sum. I next turned to WorldCat, an international library catalog operated by Online Computer Library Center that claims to cover 2 billion items in 72,000 libraries around the world. A search for our volume established that there are exactly eleven copies lodged among these collections, two in

the U.K. at St. Andrews and Oxford, but apparently none in the United States. This sounded like a treasure.

I browsed through Google hits on my search terms, and finally came across a sale record. On April 10, 2014, Freeman's Auction House in Philadelphia held a rare books and manuscripts sale. Lot 321 was a copy of the same volume as Minor's[37]. It sold for $238 including buyer's premium. I felt deflated, chastened; not anywhere near what I thought it might be worth. Yet, I had learned something. Oldest isn't most valuable, even rarest isn't most valuable. Demand is a funny thing. Coin collectors go for one thing, history buffs another. Minor went for anything at all, as long as it was eighteenth century. But ancient theologians seem to lack much panache these days.

As a final note, I also looked for the title on Books on Google Play. To my amazement, there it was! It downloads for free, all 1,170 pages of it, a photo-perfect scan that is almost as good as paging through the original. Not reading Latin, however, I tired of it quickly, as Minor probably did as well. The real prize in Lot 174 was Wilkins, and the question is, why was the Wilkins volume folded into a lot that the auction catalog described as "16 volumes including Hawks' Narrative of . . ." without any reference to Wilkins? I would think, Wilkins should have been pulled out of the group lot and auctioned singly, or held out of the auction and consigned to Sotheby's or Freeman's or some antiquarian book specialist where it would have gotten a price closer to the market.

How many other valuable gems in the collection were similarly lost track of and sold in mixed lots where their identities and values were lost from sight? This is what happens when you are under time pressure to dispose of 13,000 or more items, books or whatever they might be. Oversights will occur, mistakes will be made. It wasn't a

perfectly conceived and executed auction. I could have done better with my part of it. But under the circumstances we did the best we could.

Despite my misbegotten adventure with Lot 174, I did walk out of the auction with six volumes, sold in three lots: Thomas Mawe, *Every Man His Own Gardener,* from 1788; Hannah Glasse, *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy*, fifth edition of 1755; and *Letters Written by the Late Right Honourable Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, to His Son* in four volumes, this set published in 1777. For these six volumes I had contributed $645 to the auction receipts. Each of these three lots consisted just of the single titles, as (except for Lot 174) I had no interest in acquiring 18 or 20 volumes just to possess one thing that appealed to me. These single item lots went for a premium; they were selected to appeal to just such cherry-picking bidders as me.

As I have a certain inclination toward gardening, I thought Mawe's book might be of some interest. It is a studious and earnest book of better than 600 pages, proceeding through the months of the year and outlining the various tasks of the gardener for each month, covering the kitchen garden, the fruit garden, the flower garden, the hot-house, greenhouse, and the nursery. A bit too detailed for me. We had two holly bushes that were severely damaged by a winter in which the cold sunk well below zero for several days, and holly being such an English sort of plant, I wondered what Mawe might have to say on that score. The book informed me that hollies can serve in hedge rows, and they can be moved or transplanted best in March. But holly can still be planted as late as the first or second week of April. The common plain holly is the proper stock to graft the variegated kinds upon; then again, October is also a month when hollies can be dug

up and moved about in the garden. Ho hum. So far, Mawe has not proved to be of much practical value to me.

With Hannah Glasse, I felt I had done much better. Glasse published what may be the first serious cookbook in the English language, *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy*. The first edition came out in 1747, and it continued through 26 editions including two in America, the last issued in 1812.

OPERVM

GREGORII NAZIANZENI TOMI TRES,

Aucti nunc primùm CAESARIS, *qui frater* NAZIANZENI *fuit, ELIAE Cretensis Episcopi, PSELLI, & ipsius* GREGORII *librorum aliquot accessione.*

QVORVM editio diuturnis uigilijs, summaq; fide, qua interpretationem, qua ueteres ad libros collationem, elaborata est per IOANNEM LEVVENKLAIVM.

NEC deinceps aliam exspectari locupletiorem posse, de proœmio Lector intelliget.

Additæ sunt Annotationes, & Index quum Locorum S. Scripturæ obiter explicatorum, tum Rerum & uerborum locupletissimus.

Ex Bibliotheca Ministerii Tigurini

Cum priuilegio Imp. Maiestatis in annos X, & Regis Galliarum in annos IX.

BASILEÆ,

EX OFFICINA HERVAGIANA, per Eusebium Episcopium. MD LXXI.

I suppose Irma Rombauer's *Joy of Cooking* may rival the 65 year run of Glasse's cookbook, but then, even today Glasse is readily available from Amazon, in paperback for under $15, so one might say it has been available more or less continuously for 269 years. Many helpful tips are therein contained, including "to keep venison or hare sweet, or to make them fresh when they stink," "to bake a calf's head," "ducks a la mode," and perhaps most useful of all, "a certain cure for the bite of a mad dog." Some early owner of my copy took the time to write inside the front cover in a rather nice hand what must have been a favorite family recipe:

> To make Gooseberry Wine. Gather your Gooseberries in dry Weather, when they are Half ripe, pick them, and bruise a Peck in a Tub, with a wooden Mallet; then take a Horse-hair Cloth, and press them as much as possible without breaking the seeds. When you have pressed out all the Juice, to every Gallon of Gooseberries, put three Pounds of fine dry Powder Sugar, stir it together till the Sugar is all dissolved, then put it in a Vessel or Cask, which must be quite full. If ten or twelve Gallons, let it stand a Fortnight; if a twenty Gallon Cask, let it stand five Weeks. Set it in a cool Place, then draw it off from the Lees, clear the Vessel of the Lees, and pour in the clear Liquor again. If it be a ten Gallon Cask, let it stand three Months; if a twenty Gallon, four or five Months, then bottle it off.

Being always the helpful sort, in 2005 I started my Christmas letter to friends and relatives with this always useful information.

Minor's curriculum vitae includes a section headed "Books forthcoming and in progress." I think this was a bit

overoptimistic: I don't believe any of what followed was "forthcoming" in the sense of having been contracted with a publisher; although at least one of his notions was visibly in process (*Polymath: The Creative World of the Multi Talented*), and there might be scattered notes on a few more. One of them, however, seems unlikely to have been more than a passing fancy:

"*Baroque Cuisine: English Cookery in the Time of Handel and Haydn*. A culinary companion to the eighteenth century aspects of the interiors book, based on my seventeenth and eighteenth century cookery collections. General analysis of cookery, table service, and table ware, with recipes and notes on period varieties of fruits and vegetables. Essentially cookery as analogous to early music performance practice."

"Cookery as analogous to early music performance practice"—??? Minor, you've outdone yourself with this one. Analogy or metaphor, I smell an overreach. At least in his mind, however, Minor saw the various elements of his collection—eighteenth century, music (Scarlatti, Haydn and others), and cookery (Hannah Glasse)—all melding together into a grand, integrated scheme. Great mind at work.

Last of all I turned to Chesterfield's "Letters to his son." I bid on it because I was thinking that perhaps I would someday give it to my own son, and perhaps I will, though not for now—and I have wondered why Minor in his last days didn't pass on these volumes to his son, perhaps his namesake Minor III. I have considered reading the letters, entirely or at least in part, but I need to find some guidance on the parts that will best serve my attention. Actually, I did find that advice regarding one passage to be found in a letter that concluded

vol. 2, letter #188, written March 19, 1750. It includes the following passage:

> Buy good books, and read them; the best books are the commonest, and the last editions are always the best, if the editors are not blockheads; for they may profit of the former. But take care not to understand editions and title-pages too well. It always smells of pedantry, and not always of learning. What curious books I have, they are indeed but few, shall be at your service . . . Beware of the *Bibliomanie*.

And I might add, take that caution well, else you might end up the owner of 13,531 volumes that will get sold right out from under you with little profit and much anguish.

I began this section with a quotation from Walter Benjamin's brief meditation about his book collecting, "Unpacking my Library" (originally published 1931). Benjamin concludes with the statement that the collector of books *lives* in his collection. That is of course a metaphor. But if we think of it literally for a moment, and consider that Minor not only dedicated his life to his books but that his spirit came to pervade what he collected, then the auction that I have described was a final desecration of his very being. It was a sad day indeed.

Chapter 15

The Polymath

I write a book about things I have never learned how to do.

Michael Manley, Prime Minister of Jamaica 1972-1980, 1989-1992, and Illinois Wesleyan guest speaker

Tim Obermiller's interview with Minor Myers, published in the spring 2003 issue of *The Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine*, begins with the following: "If allowed just one word to describe Minor Myers jr, a strong candidate would be 'eclectic.' A glance at the Illinois Wesleyan president's curriculum vitae confirms this impression—overwhelmingly. Topics of the many books and articles he has published or that are in progress range from eighteenth century furniture to 'baroque cuisine,' from American baseball to Roman imperial coinage, from a historical survey of the multitalented to a biography of chemist-entrepreneur (and University friend) Arnold O. Beckman. Myers' passion for the eclectic is also evident in the objects he collects: books and musical instruments, especially from the eighteenth century; nineteenth century cookery; and an astonishing assortment of decorative arts. His diverse hobbies include playing the harpsichord and piano and, less frequently, tennis. He also loves model trains—the layout in the basement of his house includes many buildings he constructed by hand, including an N-scale office building modeled after the one where both his father and grandfather worked as lawyers in Akron."

One of the topics in Minor's *curriculum vitae* seemed to have escaped Obermillier's attention: under the heading "Books forthcoming and in progress," the top of the list is "*Polymath: The Creative World of the Multi Talented*—A survey of the multi-talented in Europe, the Americas, and Japan since the Renaissance." Although the four items under the "in

progress" heading display a robust eclecticism of the sort Obermiller observed, eclecticism itself wasn't one of Minor's interests. Multiple talents—the domain of the polymath—are what interested Minor.

It occurs to me that the interesting question is, was Minor himself a polymath, or was he a mere eclectic.[38] That is to say, did Minor's indubitable *multiple and diverse* ***interests*** (eclecticism) support him in *multiple and diverse* ***talents***? A practiced couch potato might watch dramas, sitcoms, reality shows, sports, and politics—multiple diverse interests of a sort—but we would not likely call such a person multi-talented or a polymath. Minor's insatiable appetite for eighteenth century books as well as old musical instruments, coin and stamp collecting, meteorites, baseball cards, and electric trains established his diverse interests, but were his achievements of comparable diversity? That was the final nut I wanted to crack in this exploration of the mind and character of Minor Myers.

What, then, can we discover about Minor himself from his exploration of the multi-talented? As I was moving through the various sections of these reflections, I asked Meg Miner to tell me what was in the archives from Minor's papers. Anyone who had spent time with Minor would know that researching the multi-talented ranked high among his projects. I wondered what information existed in his files and perhaps had made its way into the archives. Did he have a manuscript that was approaching publishable form, or was he still in the process of collecting biographical data and anecdotes?

Miner sent me the box list of fifteen cartons of archival material. There appeared to be many files in these boxes that related to the multi-talented project. Thus, it was with much

anticipation that I finally arranged to review these materials in the Tate Archives of The Ames Library.

Working through the archived Myers materials proved to be rewarding, but frustrating as well. Indeed, Minor had devoted a great effort over many years to his multi-talented project. He had written several chapters designed for his anticipated book and, although these are scattered throughout many file boxes, one can piece together much of the plan for the finished manuscript. The "scattered" quality of the files was the frustrating part. Little was in any order; chapter drafts were not organized into a single working draft, but scattered hither and yon. It made me think of Ralph Waldo Emerson's well-known aphorism, "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds." If so, then no little mind had been at work here.

A draft of the first chapter of *Polymath*, which he would not have written until he had many or most of the interior chapters at least in draft form, was penciled at the top, "8 pm Ap. 2, 2000" and then "Revised May 6 11:00 pm." It was titled, "Ingenious, far beyond the ordinary rate." Minor began by identifying "a basic problem in writing this book" which was, "Who fits? What is multi-talented?"

Minor quickly decided that two talents were not enough: "dual talents are everywhere," he said. Instead, he was after "long time pursuits of divers interests." He speaks of Alexander von Humboldt who, in his eighty-ninth year, was having problems with sleepless nights. "I live joyless . . . because of the much for which I have striven from my early youth, so little has been accomplished." The multi-talented are consumed with a passion for their various quests; they do not have enough time to accomplish everything. Yet, they are imbued with a "childlike enthusiasm" for their interests. They are seen to start and abandon projects again and again.

Their interests are irresistible— "the multi-talented described here grown from inner, natural, unstoppable curiosity which may border on focused obsession."

Other topics are headed "Incipient eccentricity," and "Interests as madness." He concludes with the remark "the people in this book have tended toward a completely self-motivated obsession with multiple subjects, and those are the people I have collected. I have found them fascinating, but I conclude they have often not cared whether readers do or not. They are polymaths."

Chapter Two was titled "Successful Dilettantes: Expertise and Creativity." Having in the first chapter painted the picture of the polymath with broad strokes, he was at work refining the analysis in the second. Minor begins by explaining the historical sense of dilettante. "Dilettante'" is an adaptation of the Italian "dilettanti," which first appeared in English usage in the early eighteenth century. Apparently, its initial meaning was "one with a passionate devotion to art and antiquities," both abundantly present in Italy. Of course, in its English form it came to mean one whose acquaintance with a variety of things is superficial: an "amateur" in the demeaning sense of one who doesn't understand very much. "The dilettante claims a lot, knows little, and performs badly" in contrast, the polymath "does multiple things well."

Next Minor moved on to define "expertise," for which he had devised a seven-point scale. The low end of the scale—scale value "one"—was ignorance. At the opposite with a value of seven was expertise. The neutral mid-point at value four was characterized by "a person literate in many fields, though possibly far from expert in more than one. Regularly reads books, articles, and book reviews in many fields." Meeting collegiate distribution requirements and maintaining that level of competence throughout life would keep one safely at

the neutral midpoint. Value five is "a focused hobbyist with avid interest, somewhat comparable to one who has a minor . . ." Value six is "roughly equivalent to an undergraduate major in a subject"; and the ultimate seven, true expertise, required "professional certification with or without graduate degrees . . . in a domain as an expert practitioner."

With these tools in mind, a polymath is one who ranks as a "seven" in multiple fields. Minor illustrates with the example of Albert Schweitzer, with "formal academic training to the level of expert in theology, philosophy, and medicine." Minor then throws in the monkey wrench, as it were: enter creativity, even passion. The old saw that it takes seven or ten years to develop expertise goes out the window. The avant garde performance artist Laurie Anderson, Minor points out, had released three albums before she took her first formal voice lesson (did Minor recognize that many vocal performers in the world of popular culture have never had *an*y formal voice lessons?). I begin to loose the thread here: does passionate commitment overrule the Albert Schweitzer-like careful pursuit of expertise by years of post-graduate study in a variety of fields? Does jumping in with both feet without all the collegiate education and degree-seeking trump the well-trained scholar?

Sometimes expertise is overrated. I know someone who majored in German and took up spelunking as a hobby, as a result switching to geology in graduate school; after discovering that stalactites and stalagmites in the caves he explored contained pollen grains that had seeped into caves over the millennia, he studied palynology (the study of pollen grains) in the botany department to understand pollen in geological context; then discovered that variations in the types of pollen deposited in different layers allowed one to learn about ancient climate variations and the kind of vegetation supported overhead, thus turning to meteorology

and climate science; then discovered that the best caves for pollen were in Russia and studied Russian language. He was 42 years old by the time he finished his education, and he found himself to be so specialized that he couldn't get a job. He was one of those types who have only seven colleagues in the world with expertise equivalent to his own. He went back to community college, got a certificate in data processing and went to work for the water district in his local community. He left academia somewhat embittered toward the negative value of been over-educated, of "too much expertise."

I'm not convinced that Minor's attempted analysis of the polymath holds together particularly well. He does better when free-wheeling through biographical sketches of the countless examples he accumulated. Among his papers was a document filed as "Old Appendix Roster." This appeared to be a working document; there was no reason to think he had finished it. Nonetheless, it was 45 or so pages long, with 15 entries on a typical page. That makes roughly 675 candidate polymaths, drawn from the fifteenth century and before, and continuing through the present day. Some of the entries are no more than two words: e.g., "Joyce, James–writer, tenor"; others go on for substantial paragraphs. I photocopied the alpha list A through C and here follows a brief selection of entries catching my eye.

> ***Anderson, Sherwood.*** Was manager of a paint factory in Ohio. Suddenly left factory and family for Chicago and writing. Artist.
>
> ***Arbuthnot, John.*** (1667-1735) Scottish physician, poet, essayist. Among his works were *An Essay on the Usefulness of Mathematical Learning* (1701), *The Art*

of Political Lying (1712), *Three Hours after Marriage* (1717), etc.

Barry, Steve. Professor of chemistry at Chicago, interested in molecular chemistry, thus thought of traffic patterns in a different way. MacArthur Fellow.

Baum, L. Frank. (1856-1919) A journalist who was early a writer on chickens, then on store window treatment, and finally the *Wizard of Oz*.

Behn, Aphra. (1640-1689) English poet, dramatist, writer. Wrote *Oroonoko* (1688). First woman to support herself by writing.

Borodin, Alexander Porfyrievich. (1834-1887) The composer of *Prince Igor* and many other pieces was in fact a chemist who was named assistant professor of chemistry in the St. Petersburg Medical College in 1862.

Bowles, Paul. Now age 84 in 1995. Began as composer for movies and other music, then a novelist who hit big with *A Sheltering Sky* (1949)

Bradley, Bill. Rhodes Scholar, New York Knicks player, United States Senator.

Burns, Robert. (1759-1796) Burns was a farmer from 1774-1789, working 18 acres in partnership with his brother Gilbert. To raise money for a trip to Jamaica in 1786, Burns decided to publish poems he had written for several years, and the results were far beyond any imagined.

Christina, Queen of Sweden. (1626-1689) Student of languages of Europe as well as Greek, superb administrator, who abdicated in 1654, dressed as a

man from that point. Not always popular in France. Wrote a book on Alexander the Great.

These are but a mere ten examples drawn from the estimated 675. I'm not sure that all of them are true polymaths. Robert Burns was a farmer and a poet. Was he an *expert* farmer, or merely an average one? Rosie Grier was on the list, described as "NFL football player and needlepoint." He also wrote six books, became a minister, and had a so-so recording career. Those talents didn't get mentioned. Arnold Schwarzenegger was Mr. Olympia, a star of action films, and the governor of California. Aren't those qualifications enough to match Bill Bradley's? What does a woman who dressed as a man have to do with being a polymath? Minor's critical faculties seem to have been put on the back burner as he identified fascinating quirks in countless people.

I was curious to find out if Leon Botstein was one of Minor's cases: no, he wasn't on the list. Botstein strikes me as a possible model for the kind of college president Minor might have aspired to be. Botstein became a college president at age 23, indicating some sort of precocious talent for management. The college that hired him, Franconia, was about to go under, and did so within a few years, but Bard College soon hired him and he has been President at Bard since 1975. The thing about Botstein that would appeal to Minor is the fact that he has served as music director and conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra for many years. Being only an hour or so north of New York City, Botstein can get into the city for rehearsals and an annual concert season at Carnegie Hall while maintaining his presidential duties on campus. He has established the summer Bard Music Festival,

where he lectures on a piece of music and then leads the orchestra in performance.

Botstein has also written many books, some in German. In 2011 he published *Freud und Wittgenstein Sprache und menschliche Natur;* because I have some acquaintance with the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein—14 volumes by or about him in my own library, and for that matter more than a few on Freud—I was curious to see what he had to say. But alas, I have been unable to find anything in English on this book, though I will keep looking. Minor did include at least one college president on his list, Fred Starr of Oberlin College, who in addition to his presidency was "historian and clarinetist." Incidentally, perhaps serving as a consultant of some sort, Fred Starr had visited IWU sometime around 1990, while Botstein had not.

Once when Minor had been traveling for several days, he came into my office and started telling me about the interesting conversation he had had with a seatmate on one of his flights. He was telling the man about his multi-talented project and after a while the man, who turned out to be a psychologist, said that it all sounded like ADD to him. Minor wanted to know what I could tell him about ADD—attention deficit disorder. I gave him a brief sketch, and told him that he would be able to find lots of information online.

In Minor's archive, I found a fat file folder marked "ADD" that was full of printouts of web materials addressing ADD. In writing this section, I went to a good website that addresses ADD in adults.[39] The text on this site lists dozens of signs of ADD. The diagnosis doesn't require all of them, but they are good flags for the condition if enough of the signs are present.

To illustrate, the signs characteristic of "hyperactivity and restlessness' are:

> Feelings of inner restlessness, agitation.
> Tendency to take risks.
> Getting bored easily.
> Racing thoughts.
> Trouble sitting still; constant fidgeting.
> Craving for excitement.
> Talking excessively.
> Doing a million things at once.

None of these characteristics, as described, seem to me to typify the multiple layers of expertise of the polymath. Can't sit still, racing thoughts, boredom? I don't know. I'm not the expert. Minor thought there was something to it, and he worked out a matrix with two pages of ADD traits, and four following columns, headed ADD, Asperger's Syndrome, Polymath, and Gifted. Cells in the resulting grid were answered "yes" or "no," or were left blank. A few things stand out. He had "yes" indicated for the triad of ADD, Asperger's, and Polymath for the following traits: "long focus possible; strong interests, often peculiar; normal or superior intelligence." Another pattern arose from "yes" for ADD and Polymath but not for Asperger's; here were found "added great concentration possible; trouble sleeping or minimal sleep." Under the separate heading of "Non-clinical traits" there follows a long list of yes/yeses for ADD and polymath: "eclectic, questioning, makes connections, adaptable till bored, multiple tasks, high energy, hyper-focused, intuitive, accomplish a lot in a short time when focused, flypaper brain—odd things stick, always in motion, whimsical, driven, strong willed, imaginative, good with hands-kinetic skills."

I'm a psychologist but hardly an expert on ADD. I don't know if there is anything to this or not. At best, I would

say it's an interesting conjecture, even a hypothesis, that ADD and a polymathic mind are in some ways correlated. But Minor went one step further: he listed a set of polymaths all of whom he had designated, apparently via his own assessment, with ADD. The list included Thomas Jefferson, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Thomas Edison, Henry David Thoreau, Edgar Allan Poe, Galileo Galilei, Robert Frost, Frank Lloyd Wright, Nikola Tesla, Leonardo daVinci, Ernest Hemingway, Samuel Johnson, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and Virginia Woolf. Quite a list! All ADD, he claimed.

In a letter to Andrew Schuller of Oxford University Press (November 13, 2000) in which he pitched his book, Minor remarked that "the last chapter builds on Lord Balfour's notion that the multi-talented provide the glue which holds a civilization of specialists together." And in his last paragraph, he says "My vita, which I enclose, cannot conceal that I have a mild case of the disease myself." One is forced to wonder if "childlike enthusiasm," "focused obsession," "sleepless nights," "starting and abandoning projects," were these all fresh discoveries as Minor searched out candidates for the multi-talented designation, or did they emerge through Minor's awareness of his own traits as he sought confirmation that, rather than symptoms of a malady, he possessed the characteristics of a special genius?

Less than a year before his death, Minor had written a précis of his book to be sent to potential publishers. Headed "Draft 10, Version of August 23, 2002," the concept of the book had matured in a variety of ways. He provided an alternative title, *The Leonardo Group*, in deference to the great da Vinci, the polymath of all time. Rather than chapters being organized along purely temporal lines, marching through the centuries, he had reorganized according to the nature of the

talents: modern science, art, music, literature, even a chapter on "intrigue and mysteries," meaning the *writers* of mysteries.

He had given up the claim that two talents were insufficient to qualify as polymath; there were just too many fascinating examples of dual interests. He planned to introduce characters according to their lesser known talents: Sarah Bernhardt as sculptor rather than actor; Friedrich Nietzsche as composer rather than philosopher. He ponders many puzzling questions: "Is a writer who writes on many topics a polymath? Or simply an explainer?" It seemed that the ebullient enthusiasm expressed in earlier drafts had ripened and matured. It was time for it to bear fruit. But more than he knew, Minor's time was about to run out.

Chapter 16

Last Thoughts and Acknowledgements

First, let me acknowledge the most obvious gaps in these reflections on Minor Myers jr. In a college presidency extending over fourteen years, a great deal happens. The years 1989 through 2003 were active ones in the history of Illinois Wesleyan. Consider Academic Affairs alone, the area with which I am most acquainted.

Twice during Minor's presidency, the University was evaluated by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education for ten-year reaccreditations; these evaluations occurred in 1992-3 and 2002-3. Minor paid relatively little attention to either; I recall him saying when he was Provost at Hobart and William Smith, an accreditation visit was due to begin on a particular date and he realized that no institutional self-study had been performed. According to his (possibly apocryphal) story, he stayed up the night before the visiting team's arrival and wrote the required institutional document, which was successful in grounding a ten-year reaccreditation. Were the story true, it says more about the purported expectations of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education during the 1980s than it does about Minor's facility as a deft and talented writer. Self-studies are an enormous task.

Our 1992 self-study was prepared by Larry Colter, then-Chair of the Philosophy Department. It was an adequate piece of work, incorporating sections prepared by several faculty-staff

study groups, but it was not necessarily a brilliant document. The best that can be said of it is, it got the job done. A truly exemplary piece of work had to await our 2002 self-study, similarly supported by a variety of committees and study groups, but this time coordinated, managed, and written by Mona Gardner, Professor of Finance and Associate Dean of the Faculty. This self-study, 223 pages in length, was lauded in the report of the visiting Evaluation Team: "The team found the Self-Study Report, *Growth & Challenge*, to be unusually thorough, candid, well written, well organized, and well documented. Because of its honesty, during the visit the team encountered no major surprises." Janet McNew reported to our NCA Steering Committee that Bob Appleson, the NCA staffer assigned to manage our case, "said that the Commission does plan to make our self-study document the model to hold up to other institutions in the next few years."

The general education program was reviewed and revised in 1994-95, with a program that replaced the former distributional requirements with a "nondisciplinary, goals-based model." Included in the new general education program was a course titled Gateway Colloquium, a replacement for the Expository Writing course that had been in place for several decades. The Gateway course was intended to teach not only expository writing but critical thinking—after all, doesn't one imply the other—and rather than being assigned to the English Department, was to be offered by faculty volunteering from across the University.

Soon after the creation of the Gateway, we established a First Year Advising program, based on the work of Susan Frost[40] and others who annually shared their experience and ideas

at the National Conference on the First Year Experience, now in its 35th year. While an annual standardized College Student Survey showed a Wesleyan student satisfaction rate with a variety of academic indicators that ranged from the upper 80s to mid 90 percentages, our academic advising was rated near the bottom at 53 percent satisfaction.

The new academic advising program was designed to replace the traditional prescriptive approach in advising ("Take this, this, and this next semester; you've got one free elective") with a developmental approach offering support, advice, counsel, and encouragement to students. One disgruntled faculty member complained she had no interest in becoming "friends" with her advisees, therein demonstrating her misconception of what developmental advising was all about. This was representative of the hurdles involved in establishing a more effective advising program for first year students.

On another front, throughout the 1990s, studies were conducted regarding salary equity particularly in regard to gender, and Mona Gardner brought her financial expertise to bear in devising a means of keeping salary distribution within equitable limits according to academic rank. And in addition to all else that was going on, the faculty under McNew grew by 23 new tenure-line faculty positions.

The initial move to appoint additional faculty predated McNew, with the ad hoc Committee on Academic Resources and Programs (CARP), established in 1988. Over the next two years, this group developed a proposal that received administrative support, first from Acting President Wendell Hess and then from Minor, for the addition of ten positions

to the faculty in liberal arts, phased in over five years. Soon after CARP was disbanded, the faculty established the new Committee on University Programs and Policies (CUPP), which continues today as the centerpiece of faculty governance. Additionally, the entire personnel policy for tenure and advancement was revised, replacing the rather paternalistic procedures as they existed under the Eckley administration with procedures that reflected a new maturity in the expanding self-governance of faculty affairs. Added together, all these changes bordered on the breathtaking. To engage in a bit of hyperbole, Illinois Wesleyan was taking off like a rocket.

The action that perhaps most deeply concerned the faculty was development and adoption of a plan to reduce the faculty teaching load from seven courses annually to six. The "Seven to Six" proposal, while appearing to be a fairly straightforward issue, was fraught with complications. For example, reducing teaching load from seven to six courses results in a 14 percent reduction in the number of courses that can be offered annually. To put the matter in the starkest terms, the desired course load reduction would have the same effect as reducing the productive size of the faculty from, say, 140 to 120. Were the administration suddenly to announce that 20 faculty positions would be cut for the following year, outrage would have swept over the faculty. But saying the teaching load would be reduced by one course annually resulted in celebration. We were able to identify the challenges of the course load reduction and to devise a plan that minimized the negative impact while reducing the annual course preparations of the faculty and

not discouraging the faculty from the advantages of the overall plan.

I sat on the Steering Committee of both the 1992 and 2002 Self-Study Committees; as a member of CARP wrote the final and successful position paper; taught more sections of the Gateway Colloquium over the first five years of the program than anyone else on the faculty; chaired the First Year Advising Committee; and did essentially all of the research on the curricular and enrollment impact of the "Seven to Six" concept that was handed off to CUPP for review and recommendation to the faculty for final vote. Thus, I know quite a bit about all of these initiatives. Minor, although a reliable and even enthusiastic advocate for these various faculty initiatives, did not presume to an active leadership role in any of it. He was busy with other things, and in any event he wanted to avoid any appearance of attempting to micromanage the constitutional prerogatives of the faculty. Consequently, these projects were left to the faculty, and to the Provost and her staff.

But the accomplishments of the Myers administration extend across all the divisions of the University. In addition to the achievements in academic affairs, the Advancement Office conducted a major capital campaign whose initial goal of $58 million was eventually closed after topping out with more than $100 million in gifts and pledges. The best Admissions years in the school's history produced some of the numbers Minor had been urging as applications climbed over 3,000, resulting in selectivity achieving new heights. Following a major Student Affairs study of alcohol on campus led by Jim Matthews in his term as Dean of Students, the Methodist "dry campus" policy fell. The new Hansen

Center featured Tommy's, a gastro-pub with beer on tap, and new rules were established permitting alcohol at campus events. The list could go on and on—these were indeed the glory years of the University. Discussion of all the foregoing is left for some other treatise yet to be attempted that will address all that happened over the amazing years of 1989-2003. The scope of my reflections has been more limited.

As I worked on the manuscript, I received assistance and feedback from a variety of people. My successor as Associate Provost, Frank Boyd, read the manuscript, as did Ann Aubry, Carl Teichman, Meg Miner, and Jo Porter, all providing moral support and helpful feedback. Teichman was particularly helpful at this time.

Vadim Mazo was another warm and generous interlocutor. Linda Farquharson, Todd Tucker, and Bob Delvin of the School of Music all offered additional comments on Minor's musical interests and predilections. George Vinyard, President of the Board of Trustees of Illinois Wesleyan University, gave it a careful reading and made numerous suggestions.

Meg Miner and then Chris Sweet helped me navigate my way through the Minor Myers material in The Ames Library Archives and Special Collections. By the time I had a complete draft of the manuscript that needed the eyes of a practiced editor, we identified Gail Gaboda '88 to provide the final editing. We quickly established a good working relationship, and Gail helped me resolve quite a number of rough spots. I am deeply grateful for her careful attention

and contributions to the project. And so it went, with many helping hands. Everyone's assistance is much appreciated.

I want to give special thanks to my wife Nancy Cosner, for her patience, even endurance, as I spent many hours day after day on this task and neglected a variety of household responsibilities because of my obsession with completing this manuscript. Not only did she provide support and quiet understanding throughout the writing, she was the first to read the complete manuscript and offered many pieces of helpful advice.

The work of Meg Miner. A final contributor requires special acknowledgement. On her sabbatical leave in 2015-16, Meg Miner undertook a research project on the Minor Myers jr. collection, resulting in a final sale catalog from the auction, and two manuscripts. One manuscript is based on an extensive oral history she collected in interviews with sixty-five individuals as well as written remembrances from twenty-six more ("Portrait of a Collector: Reflections on an Influential Bibliophile," 27 pp.), and the other is her analysis of Minor's collecting and collection, largely based on documentary evidence ("Portrait of a Collector: A View from the Shelves of Minor Myers, jr.", 11 pp.)

I first read these essays in late November 2016, several months after having completed my own manuscript in all respects but final editing. They make fascinating reading, and anyone interested in pursuing Minor's bibliomania will find them well worth careful attention. As I was writing the final chapters of the manuscript, it occurred to me that others might prepare their own thoughts, memories, and feelings regarding Minor in written form. Little did I realize that Meg

was already at work writing up her extensive research, and I deeply appreciate her interest and dedication to her project. Thanks, Meg!

I was relieved to discover from Meg's research that one of Minor's dearest possessions, the Peter Pelham music book of 1744 (see p. 111), had found its way to a safe haven. As I mentioned earlier, Minor claimed on his CV that he had in preparation a book on Peter Pelham's 1744 copybook of harpsichord pieces. I found a draft of his introduction to Pelham's transcribed minuets, marches, and allemandes among the Tate Archives materials and made myself a copy.

Presumably, the Pelham work itself had remained with Ellen Myers as part of her agreement with the University. Meg investigated and located the original Pelham manuscript that had been in Minor's possession; it now can be found in the library of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Furthermore, a printed edition is now available under the title *The Peter Pelham Manuscript of 1744* (Colfax NC: Wayne Leupold Editions, 2005) edited by Joseph Butler. When I learned of this, I quickly acquired a copy. To my disappointment, however, Minor Meyers is mentioned only once, and in a footnote at that, wherein Butler asserts that "Very little is known of the provenance of the document. In the 1980s it was purchased at Goodspeed's Bookstore in Boston by the late Minor Myers, Jr. . . . It is believed that the book was passed down through the Pelham family prior to its appearance at Goodspeed's. I am indebted to Dr. Myers for first sharing the contents of the copybook with me."

But Butler does not have the story quite right, for in his introduction to the Pelham transcriptions, Minor had made

a good case regarding the provenance of the copybook. To begin with, the book was not presented to Goodspeed's in the 1980s by anyone in the Pelham family. It had been in the possession of the Marston-Watson family in Boston at least from the 1840s where it was converted into a scrapbook, mainly for newspaper clippings. Someone from that family eventually brought it to Goodspeed's, where Minor acquired it in 1985. In contrast, Peter Pelham, after studying for nine years with Charles Theodor Pachelbel in Newport, Rhode Island, and then Charleston, South Carolina, moved to Boston for the six years from 1744 to 1750, after which he relocated to Williamsburg Virginia to become organist for the Bruton Parish Church. There he lived on for the rest of his life.

It is almost certain that in 1744 the copybook remained in the hands of his unidentified student from Boston for whom it appears to have been prepared, where 240 years later it made its way into the inventory of a Boston bookseller. Almost certainly the book never left eastern Massachusetts to rejoin the possession of the Pelham family in Virginia. Minor did research on the ancestry of Benjamin Marston Watson of Plymouth Massachusetts, the person who had repurposed the copybook as a scrapbook for newspaper clippings in the 1840s. Minor determined there were only two candidates within the family, both girls and of an age in 1744 to be taking harpsichord lessons, for whom the copybook plausibly could have been prepared. Their names were Elizabeth Chauncy (age 13) and Patience Marston (age 10). I must note that my mother was a Marston, descended from William Marston who in 1634 with his wife and three sons left England to settle in Massachusetts Colony at Salem—it should be noted

that Patience Marston also came from Salem. But I've said more than enough. These are but tales to fuel the passions of a bibliomane.

rhs
January 2017

Endnotes

Minor Myers's passion for books extended in a number of directions, among them, to typefaces. He had been at Illinois Wesleyan several years before discovering that a noted type designer of the early twentieth century was a native of Bloomington. Born in 1865, Frederic W. Goudy moved to Chicago and, without any formal training preparing him as a type designer, eventually created 113 different fonts. His most successful, Goudy Old Style, was designed in 1915. It quickly became one of the most successful typefaces in the United States, where it continued to be popular for several decades. When Minor discovered Goudy's Bloomington origins, he immediately proposed that Goudy Old Style be adopted as the Illinois Wesleyan printing standard. Unfortunately, the proposal ran into several roadblocks, and the idea was eventually abandoned. In fulfillment of Minor's original plan, however, Goudy Old Style was adopted as the font for this book. As far as I know, it is the only time this font has been used in a university publication, in honor of Minor's dream.

[1] See p. 224. In Minor's discussion of ADD, a condition that he finds congruent with the mind of the polymath, he attributes a "childlike enthusiasm" to this "disease" by which through his own acknowledgement he himself was possessed. That is, he seems to acknowledge his own childlike enthusiasm for the passions in his life.

[2] No information on the actual investments shows up on the annual audit reports from 1958-62; by chance, stuck in the front of the archived copy of the 1960 audit is the Comptroller's Report, dated May 21, 1960, which contains the detail on the actual investments at that time. No other comptroller's reports are in the University Archives in The Ames Library.

[3] Here is Minor speaking to the IWU Board of Trustees in his President's Report, October 27, 1997: "Let me talk about a few other things. A few of us are looking for a bust of Pythagoras to put in the office because we believe in numbers. Numbers are the stuff of management in that we can count it, we can manipulate it, we can work on it. There are real distinctions to be found in numbers and that's where these ratings come from, and this talk about being in the Top 25 is not just idle waste, not just something to prove that we can do this. If we have a program that numbers in the Top 25, think of the quality that means to the students who come here to be a part of it. It means successful in terms of educational resources. It means successful in terms of retention and graduation and presumably the richness of the program. And there is also that

intangible, wondrous status that comes with it. Here are some things I think we have yet to do. If we can nudge our application pool up to 3,000, we will look better and we would have to have an acceptance rate under 50 percent; it might actually be closer to 40 percent. The SAT would probably go to around 1,300, which moves us very comfortably into the top group. One place we need to move up is the percentage of the class that is in the top 10 percent [of their high school class]. Ironically, ten years ago it was higher than it is now. We had a lower academic profile but because of the different pattern from which we grew we had a higher percentage of kids in the top 10 percent." Yes, Minor was ratings fixated, and ratings are numbers, so lets get the numbers up. That was his management mantra, numbers, always better numbers.

[4] Although not identified in the news release on the concert, I have a strong hunch that the Camarata performed in the Adler & Sullivan Chicago Stock Exchange trading room from 1893 that had been reconstructed at the Art Institute in 1976-77 to accommodate such events. The date of the performance was April 12, 1992.

[5] The phrase used by a member of the School of Music faculty who had heard Minor perform publicly and is himself an accomplished pianist.

[6] My information on *The College Inn Revisited* came from an article written by Deborah Obalil for *The Argus*, April 29, 1994, and an IWU News Release dated April 15, 1994. The information on *Dido and Aeneas* also came from *The Argus*, in an uncredited "News Brief", November 3, 1989.

[7] It is dated October 31, 2011, and can be found at a blogsite called "people-triggers," a WordPress blog authored by Scott Fenstermaker, an Illinois Wesleyan theatre BFA alumnus of '00—Minor referred to members of this class as "the oughtie-oughts."

[8] This information has been drawn from *IWU News & Events*.

[9] On November 15, 1996 Maya Angelou visited Illinois Wesleyan; the Shirk Center was filled for her talk. Several years later, Spike Lee received a similar enthusiastic campus response.

[10] Janet McNew prepared a five-page summary of the Oakbrook Retreat dated April 2001, titled *Toward a Shared Vision: The Oakbrook Report*. All quoted material is taken from this report.

[11] Glenn Swichtenberg and I used to give a talk to parents of incoming students at summer orientation sessions. Glenn dealt with the social adjustment to

college; I talked about the academic challenges ahead. One of my points was, "Over half of your sons and daughters were in the top 10 percent of their high school class; but at Wesleyan half our students don't make it into our top 10 percent. Actually, we have just 10 percent in our top 10 percent." This always brought a chuckle. I was addressing a "zero sum" point similar to Breneman's.

[12] Minor's brother Tom wrote a brief memoir titled "Minor's Early Years" that is accessible on the IWU Minor Myers website, but it doesn't address anything about book collecting. The most interesting material concerns the death of a retired professor, George Hantelman, who lived in a house owned by the Meyerses. Hantelman was a hoarder of sorts: "the house had three floors, each stuffed with possessions." Minor's father settled with the estate's attorney for $5, and Minor had the pick of whatever he wanted. He seemed to cart home quite a lot.

[13] Meg Miner, "Portrait of a Collector," October 2016, p. 2.

[14] Following Minor's death, Ellen Myers enlisted Carol Struck of About Books (221 E. Front Street, Bloomington) to perform an appraisal of 113 books that Minor apparently considered to be the most noteworthy among his collection. Included in this list was Condorcet's *Progress of the Human Mind,* an English translation published in Dublin in 1796. When Minor had purchased this volume we don't know. Whether he had been dipping into this volume, or had run across some treatment of Condorcet elsewhere, we do not know.

[15] In the Tim Obermiller interview with Minor published in the Spring 2003 issue of *The Illinois Wesleyan Magazine,* two paragraphs are devoted to comments on the Enlightenment. In his discussion, Minor states that the Enlightenment grew out of "The Republic of Letters," an international community of scholars with roots as far back as the early fifteenth century. One widely consulted web resource states that "Today, most Anglo-American historians, whatever their point of entry to the debate, occupy a common ground: the Republic of Letters and the Enlightenment were distinct." However this might be interpreted, it doesn't appear that Minor's acquaintance with the contemporary critique of the Enlightenment was particularly up to date.

[16] Sarah VanSickle, "President's shelves collect more than dust," *The Argus,* February 28, 1997.

[17] Meg Miner, "Portrait of a Collector," October 2016, p. 5.

[18] John Hill Burton, *The Book-Hunter.* New York: Sheldon, 1862; quoted in Basbanes, *A Gentle Madness,* pp, 17-18.

[19] An interesting description of Warhol's collections can be found in Suzanne Muchnic's *Los Angeles Times* article of February 21, 1988.

[20] Chicago Tribune, July 27, 2003.

[21] There are two exceptions here. First, in 1995 Minor had donated 9,500 items of collegiate materials—258 linear feet of catalogs, class histories, yearbooks, etc. from 1,300 institutions, dating 1828-1977. This collection is maintained in the Tate Archives. Second, he donated a large collection of "Chicago music," much of it focused on the 1920s, the same era as his play, *The College Inn Revisited*. This material, given jointly by Minor and Ellen Myers in May of 2003, is now in storage at The Ames Library. The material in both donations, while clearly among Minor's salvaging projects, was peripheral to his main interests in books of the eighteenth century, early music manuscripts, etc. Frankly, these collections have been something of a "white elephant" for the Ames Library.

[22] Once Ellen Myers showed me a book she had found at the downtown Bloomington Antiques Mall, in the basement of the old Montgomery Ward building. It was small, about 5 x 7 inches, an inch-and-a-half thick, and the cover had been clumsily repaired with silver-gray duct tape. I believe she told me she had bought it for a dollar. I don't remember the date specifically, but it was something like MDLXV. The topic was astrology or astronomy, something vaguely scientific if I remember correctly. Ellen was rather proud of her discovery.

[23] I do not know who the anecdote is about, but I have taken the liberty of attributing it to Philip Stanhope, Fourth Earl of Chesterfield. He seems as likely a candidate as anyone, being the source of the aphorism, "Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today" and related sentiments.

[24] The F. W. Olin Foundation is not to be confused with the John M. Olin Foundation supporting politically conservative causes, such as the Federalist Society. John M. Olin was Franklin W. Olin's son, but the two foundations were fully independent of each other. Both closed in 2005.

[25] Scott, Foresman and Co. had published what would eventually become a series of three books, all titled *Control of Human Behavior;* vol. 1 from 1966, was among the first books on behavior modification with a resulting considerable impact (notoriety, in some people's minds) on the profession.

[26] Heather Hahn, in the summer 2000 issue of the *Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine*, says it differently: "Illinois Wesleyan's relationship with Pembroke

College began in 1996, when IWU President Minor Myers, jr., was traveling in Japan to attend a wedding. During a bus trip, he happened to sit next to Pembroke's tutor of admissions, who later invited Myers to England for a tour, at which time the two universities arranged for a single IWU student to study each year at Pembroke. Not one but six Illinois Wesleyan students were selected for admission into Pembroke the following year."

[27] All the quotations from this meeting come from the "Transcript of the Regular Stated Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Illinois Wesleyan University, February 10, 2003."

[28] A website with a substantial archive of Commemoration addresses as well as a bulletin board established soon after Minor's passing and open to students, faculty, and friends remains available at **https://sun.iwu.edu/~iwunews/Myers**.

[29] The BookFinder website lists three copies currently available, high and low from the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America, at $4,512 and $7,512. The penciled in value range seems to be the more accurate. The book does not appear on the About Books appraisal. It was sold at the Sept. 17, 2005 auction.

[30] New York Times, 14 June 2015.

[31] NB: this proposal carries the date of June 2003, some months before Minor's death. Although the agreement had places for Sue Stroyan and Ellen Myers to cosign, I assume that Minor was at least aware of the plan, if not giving his written consent to it. But this proposal was never formalized.

[32] Eventually we retained only 1,309 titles, or 10.4 percent of the inventoried collection.

[33] The single 15th century book, dated 1497, by Jacob de Voragine, appeared to be a history of Lombardy.

[34] Memo to me dated 27 April 2004.

[35] Recall that the Sotheby's auction of Andy Warhol's estate consisting of 10,000 items in 6,000 lots lasted ten days.

[36] $117,102.93 in gross sales, minus $24,993.55 About Books auction commission and expenses. A note in Minor's hand prepared sometime during his final illness includes the notation, "$115,000 [inventory?] investment cost in rare books bought in last 5-7 years." I was surprised to see this number. If Minor had paid only $115,000 for a collection part of which we had bought

for $292,000 plus the music collection appraised at $91,000, then he had within seven years made a gain in investment value of over 300 percent. One couldn't touch that rate of return on the stock market. I think therefore that something must be amiss with Minor's estimated investment.

[37] Quite possibly it *was* Minor's volume, which had been bought by a bookseller in St. Louis whom I talked to on the phone a few days after the auction. After holding it for several years, he may have used Freeman's to move it. On the other hand, one can't help but notice the nearly equivalent values of Minor's $115,000 estimated investment and the auction's gross return of $117,103. Perhaps this is evidence that Minor's investment hadn't shown much appreciation at all over the years in which he had been investing so heavily in books. Of course, this interpretation would imply that the Joyce appraisal of the collection's value had been grossly overestimated. The truth may lie somewhere between: we failed to optimize the return from the auction, but the Joyce estimate that drove our purchase price may have been overly generous. It really is quite impossible to sort this out today.

[38] The *Princeton Alumni Weekly* made short work of the question in their November 5 issue of 2003: "Myers himself was a polymath," it said.

[39] Search words: Adult ADD/ADHD: Signs, Symptoms, Effects, and Treatment; Web address: www.helpguide.org/articles/add-adhd/adult-adhd-attention-deficit-disorder.htm

[40] Susan H. Frost, *Academic Advising for Student Success*, 1991 ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Reports.

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